

SOME ACCOUNT
OF THE
Shrewsbury House of Industry.
ITS ESTABLISHMENT,
REGULATIONS, AND BYE-LAWS:
WITH
HINTS TO THOSE
WHO MAY
HAVE SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS IN VIEW.

Fifth Edition.

TO WHICH IS NOW ADDED,
A LARGE INTRODUCTION,
CONTAINING
GENERAL OBSERVATIONS
On the present State of the Poor,
AND THE
DEFECTIVE SYSTEM
OF THE
Poor's Laws.

BY I. WOOD.

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ACCOUNT



TO
THE SOCIETIES
FOR
BETTERING THE CONDITION OF THE POOR,
AND
FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT
OF
ARTS, COMMERCE, AND MANUFACTURES;
THIS PUBLICATION
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED;

By

Their most obedient

humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

TO

THE SOCIETIES

OF

RELIEFING THE CONDITION OF THE POOR

IN THE CITY OF LONDON

AND

FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT

OF THE ARTS AND MANUFACTURES

AND COMMERCE

AND EDUCATION

IN AGREEMENT WITH THE

BY

THE SOCIETY OF

ARTS AND MANUFACTURES

THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PRESENT STATE OF THE POOR,

AND THE DEFECTIVE SYSTEM OF

THE POOR'S LAWS.

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INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS, &c.

SO lamentably apparent is the increasing wretchedness of the Poor, notwithstanding the enormous and growing amount of that legal revenue, which in this nation only is levied for their relief; that many intelligent writers on the subject have been led to question the utility of that provision. — “The English plan,” says Lord KAMES, in his *Sketches of the History of Man*, “besides being oppressive, is grossly unjust: should it be supposed of some distant nation, that the burden of maintaining the idle and profligate, was laid upon the frugal and industrious, what would be thought of such a nation?” — “So very useless,” remarks the discerning HENRY FIELDING, “is this heavy tax, and so wretched its application, that it is a question whether the poor or the rich are actually more dissatisfied; since the plunder

of the one, serves so little to promote the real advantage of the other."

Sir FREDERICK EDEN has with great ability discussed the question, whether a national provision for the poor would be an advisable measure to be adopted, in a country where no such establishment existed? and, I conceive, has advanced unanswerable arguments for deciding it in the negative: but he very properly adds, that "faulty and defective as our system may be in its original constitution, and in its modern ramifications, he must be a bold and rash projector who should propose to level it to the ground." Most assuredly this parochial contribution could not now be withdrawn, without introducing dreadful misery and distress among them. On the other hand, the amount of this tax *has* advanced, and *is* advancing by such rapid strides, that we are loudly called upon by the imperious voice of necessity, to stem that torrent which threatens to overwhelm the great mass of the people, in one common ruin.

"That this is the case," says Mr. RUGLES, "that the aggregate of misery is greater among the poor than it was; that the axiom, *it has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished,*

diminished, is to the full as true as ever was the same axiom when applied to the influence of the crown, no one who sees their present wretchedness, and knows the amount of the rates raised for their relief, will hesitate to allow; and while this remarkable sentence is applied to their *miserable situation*, with equal force will it apply to the *revenue* raised for their relief."—History of the Poor, by T. RUGGLES, Esq. F. A. S. p. 137.

"Our poor's rates have gone on increasing with such astonishing rapidity, as to have doubled their former amount within the last twenty years."—Sir F. M. EDEN's State of the Poor, vol. I. preface, p. 25.

"The poor's tax in England, I have no doubt, exceeds Three Millions a year."—*Ibid.* p. 131, note.

"Amount of money raised by Assessment in England and Wales in

	l.	s.	d.
1776	1,720,316	14	7

Medium of money raised by assessment in do. in 1783,

1784, and 1785	2,167,749	13	8.
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—*Ibid.* pages 263, 371.

Certain

Certain it is, that in the present state of the public burdens, any further addition to the poor's rates, or even their continuance much longer on the scale to which they have already extended, would annually add to the number of the parochial poor, thousands of honest industrious families, who have hitherto contributed to their relief; and thus increase the demand upon this fund, in the same proportion that it diminished the number of those, by whom the increasing burden must be borne.

The dictates, therefore, both of humanity and sound policy, direct our attention rather to the correction of those abuses which have been found to result from the present imperfect system, than to the abolition of the tax itself; and the grand *desideratum* is, to render the parochial aid a Stimulus to Industry, and not a fund for the Encouragement of Idleness, operating as an additional temptation to profligacy and debauchery.

There have not been wanting writers, however, who have boldly defended the present system, denied the existence of those evils and defects of which it has been accused, and set their faces as a flint against all Reform. Their arguments have indeed been confuted
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from the highest authorities, and by the most conclusive reasonings; but as these are only to be met with either buried in bulky volumes, or scattered through a great variety of smaller publications, it may be of considerable use to collect together, and place in one point of view, the most weighty and important of those arguments and authorities to which I refer. When these divided rays are thus converged, and brought to unite in one common focus, their combined force will be found to be irresistible.

EXTRACTS.

"It were to be wished, not only that the poor should be sustained, but also that the honest person who has hard means to live, upon whom the poor are now charged, should be in some sort eased. And therefore I commend most those mixed hospitals, where the impotent person is relieved, and the sturdy beggar buckled to work, and the unable person also not maintained in idleness, which is ever joined with drunkenness and impurity, but is sorted with such work as he can manage and perform.—There is a great difference between that which is done by the distracted government of justices of the peace,"

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(that is, whose minds are distracted and disturbed by the various other objects which in cities and great towns constantly demand their attention *) "and that which may be done by a settled ordinance, subject to a regular visitation, as these may be." † — BACON.

"The defects of the provision made by the 43d of Elisabeth are, that there is no superintendant power to compel the raising of a stock where the overseers neglect it; and that the act chargeth every parish apart, which would not be so effectual, as if three, four, five, or more contiguous parishes did contribute towards the raising of a stock, and that there is no power for hiring or erecting a common house, which might be useful and necessary." — Sir MATTHEW HALE.

"The multiplying of the poor, and the increase of the tax for their maintenance, is so general

"In large populous parishes it must often be the case, that the magistrate has neither leisure to investigate, nor means of ascertaining, the circumstances of every pauper that comes before him." — Sir F. M. EDEN, vol. I. p. 268.

† "When Sir FRANCIS BACON drew up this letter of advice to his master JAMES the First, he must surely have conceived in his mind some idea of *incorporated Houses of Industry*." — RUGGLES.

general an observation and complaint, that it cannot be doubted of: the evil has proceeded neither from scarcity of provisions, nor from want of employment; and it can be nothing else but the relaxation of discipline, and the corruption of manners. It may be concluded upon a very moderate computation, that above one half of those who receive relief from the parishes, are able to get their livelihood. *An allowance given once a week, or once a month, to the father in money, is not seldom spent at the ale-house, whilst his children are left to perish at home, unless the charity of neighbours relieve them.*"—LOCKE.

"Whether the employment of the poor turns to present profit or not, is not much material; the great business of the nation being, first, to keep the poor from begging and starving, and inure such as are idle to labour and discipline, that they may be hereafter useful members to the kingdom."*—SIR JOSIAH CHILD.

"The cause of idleness, is the abuse of the poor's laws we have, and want of better.

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Our

* "This maxim deserves to be written in letters of gold in all work-houses, houses of industry, schools of industry, and to be engraved in capitals in the overseer's books in every parish in the kingdom."—RUGGLES.

Our laws to set the poor to work are short and defective, tending rather to maintain them in poverty, than to raise them to a better way of living; and to render them more bold, when they know the parish officers are bound either to provide them work, or to give them maintenance."—CARY.

"The number of poor is occasioned by those who *will not work*, not by those who *can get no work*."—DEFOR.

"It must be matter of astonishment to any man to reflect, that in a country where the poor are beyond all comparison more liberally provided for than in any other part of the world, there should be found more beggars, more miserable distressed objects, than are to be seen throughout all the states of Europe. That the poor are a very great burden, and even a nuisance to the kingdom; that the laws for relieving their distresses, and restraining their vices, have not answered their purposes; and that they are very ill provided for, and worse governed; are truths which every man will acknowledge. Such have been the unanimous complaints of all writers who have considered this matter down from the days of Queen Elisabeth; such is apparently the sense of
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of the legislature; and such is the universal voice of the nation. Every man who hath property must feel the weight of that tax which is levied for the use of the poor; and every person who hath any understanding, must see how absurdly it is applied." — *FIELDING.*

"The very law that provides for the poor, increases their number: compulsion to relieve, is contrary to the principle of charity, destroys gratitude in the receivers, and creates ill-blood, murmuring, and indignation on the side of the contributor. The shameless, the impudent, the idle, the least deserving, run away with the legal exaction; while the modest, the bashful, and really indigent, are suffered to languish in the most distressful circumstances imaginable." — *ALCOCK.*

"Our poor laws are not only unjust and impolitic, but they proceed upon principles bordering on absurdity, as professing to accomplish that, which in the very nature and constitution of the world is impracticable. They say, that in England no man, even though by his indolence, improvidence, prodigality and vice, he may have brought himself to poverty, shall ever suffer want. — Were the provision for the poor twice as much as it now is, we

should soon find twice the number of poor we now have."—TOWNSEND.

"The defects of the parochial system, are the division into parishes; the maintaining the poor in separate families; and the annual election of parish officers. Every person who is elected only for twelve months, will naturally adopt that scheme which will give him the least trouble during his office, whatever it may give his successor, or however it may affect the public."—Dean TUCKER; who follows up these observations by recommending an incorporation of several adjoining parishes, under regulations similar to those now adopted in houses of industry.

"Something appears necessary to be done for the benefit of the poor themselves; not by extending the operation of a system, which is adverse, in many points of view, to the exertion of honest industry, but by checking the too ready encouragement which it offers to idleness, improvidence, and immorality."—Sir F. M. EDEN.

"The poor pay to the rates for the sake of the poorer, and are themselves sinking from want of maintenance and relief.—Notwithstanding

standing the immense amount of the poor's rate, poverty and misery not only remain, but seem to advance, nearly in the proportion that our expenditure increases, while idleness and dissoluteness of manners go hand in hand, and the next generation promises to be worse than the present." — RUGGLES.

"It is a lamentable but generally acknowledged fact, that although no country in Europe is burdened with half the oppressive taxations for the support of its poor, nor can boast of half the eleemosynary institutions projected for their assistance, as Great Britain — there is no country in which the poor are either so numerous, or so wretched: — every parochial, and every private effort, seems equally to fail in their original and charitable intention." — GOOD.

"It is the dependance upon the poor rates that has occasioned more poverty, idleness, and worthlessness among a particular class of people in this country, than in any other. By every attempt at being liberal to the poor (on the present system) we shall render their situation more deplorable, and at the same time increase the public expense, and means of speculation. — The powers granted to the
overseer

overseer are very great — he is authorized to demand any sum or sums of money from the parish, which he receives and expends, without any *intervening* check or controul. He has not the smallest inducement from fee, reward, or future credit, to execute the trust with attention. — To complete this absurd system, the parish that is fortunate enough to meet with an overseer who executes the duty in a conscientious manner, cannot continue to avail itself of his services; but *must* change him every other, if not *every* year. There is, therefore, a total want of stimulus to exertion, in a situation where confidence is given in an unbounded degree." — R. SAUNDERS, Esq.

"The poor laws of this country, however wise in their original institution, have contributed to fetter the circulation of labour, and to substitute a system of abuses, in room of the evils which they humanely meant to redress; and by engrafting upon a defective plan defective remedies, produced nothing but confusion and disorder." — Mr. PITT'S Speech.

It may fairly be presumed, that the combined sentiments of so many great men and distinguished writers on the subject, supported

as they are too by the undeniable fact that the increase of the poor's rates, and the increasing wretchedness of the poor themselves, are both rapidly progressive; are sufficient to establish the conclusion, that there do exist some radical defects in the present parochial system. What those defects are, may likewise be pretty clearly deduced from the foregoing quotations; namely, the *indiscriminate* provision made for *all* the parochial poor; the vesting *annual* overseers with full powers to administer that provision, confiding to men *so appointed* the whole management of the parochial fund, and neglecting to furnish employment for the poor.

It has been contended, however, that the increasing distresses of the poor are owing altogether to the advanced price of the necessities of life; while the price of labour, or the wages of the poor, have remained stationary. And this opinion has been so far acted upon, that the first clause in the late poor's bill gave to *all* poor families *indiscriminately*, consisting of more than two children, conforming to the provisions of the act, a right to demand *additional* weekly parochial allowances.

The same sentiment respecting the cause of the poor's distress, has also been adopted
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by many truly respectable writers and individuals, from whom it may perhaps be thought presumptuous to differ. But this is a case of so much importance to the welfare of the community, that it seems to demand a fair and impartial investigation; and while the discussion is conducted with good temper, candour, and liberality, it cannot give reasonable cause of offence to any man.—“I have always,” said Mr. PITT, “considered the subject as one of the most important that could ever occupy a man’s attention; and one that ought not to depend on the opinion or information of one person only, but upon the general knowledge, and investigation, of all who chuse to make it matter of enquiry.”*

Whatever be the subject, *that* discussion which has for its sole object the advancement of truth, is at once pleasant and profitable. The collision of ingenuous minds, excites and emits that sacred flame, which illuminates every object to which it is directed, and conducts to the highest degree of practical improvement. But it is much to be desired, that all who engage in this disquisition, would enter upon it divested as far as possible of those preconceived opinions and prejudices, which are apt to

* Woodfall’s Reports.

to place an undue bias upon the mind, mislead the judgment, and darken the understanding.

The situation of the country, or cottage poor, and that of those who are claimants for the parochial provision in cities or large towns; is in very many respects so totally different, I may say opposite; that the reasoning which is extremely well adapted to the case of the one, by no means applies to that of the other. And to this circumstance may be attributed much of that difference of opinion which has prevailed among writers on this subject. I wish strongly to impress the conviction of this truth; for unless it be seriously attended to, I humbly conceive, no well digested plan for ameliorating their condition, can possibly be laid down.

To the families of the cottage poor, a reasonable allowance of parochial relief, particularly in seasons of occasional distress, will undoubtedly *in general* be better administered to them in their own dwellings. The cottager enjoys the advantage of good air, frequently also, of a garden or little croft, if not the benefit of a common, which furnishes him with many of the necessaries of life for the support of his family; and his children are
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early employed in various agricultural labours. Neither are these poor so much exposed to those temptations, which have been the means of introducing almost universal depravity and corruption of morals among the town paupers. To compel the former *indiscriminately* to quit their own dwellings and reside in a poor-house, would be equally cruel and impolitic. But there are too many even of the cottage poor, whose habitations are the wretched abodes of filth and misery; where the children, in consequence of the idleness and profligacy of their parents, are totally neglected, or trained up in the habits of theft and beggary; and where the parochial allowances, instead of administering to the supply of their real wants, are devoted to the gratification of their vicious propensities.—Is it just?—Is it politic?—Is it humane, to suffer these wretches to prey upon the public, and live at the expense of the sober and industrious? What law, human or divine, is violated by compelling such characters to labour in a well regulated House of Industry for their support, until they manifest a disposition to maintain their families by their own exertions?—Is it cruelty, to instruct, to clothe, and to employ their offspring in such an establishment; to train them up in habits of decency and virtue;

tue; and turn them out into the world at a proper age, with every advantage calculated to render them useful members of the community?

And even among this class of the poor in general, when their families are so numerous as to require constant parochial aid; it would not surely deserve the charge of inhumanity, if the mode of administering that relief were by taking a part of their children (not into a common work-house, but) into such a well conducted parochial seminary, where they would be employed according to their age and strength, under the immediate inspection of a Board of respectable Directors, and under such settled regulations as would effectually prevent any improper treatment; where they would enjoy the benefits of instruction in those schools which make a part of such establishments, and be brought up in habits of industry, cleanliness, and decency; allowing at the same time mutual intercourse with their parents and families. The great mistake has been, to indulge in general declamation; to draw a picture of these establishments from fancy, and not from actual observation; to imagine I know not what severity and inhuman regulations, which I verily believe never took place in any one of these institutions; and to conjure up phantoms which never existed

but in the wild reveries of a heated imagination.

The writers upon the state of the poor, have almost universally been gentlemen whose attention has been principally directed to the case of these country paupers; and whose ideas of a reform in the poor's laws, and an amelioration of their condition, have consequently been more particularly applicable to this class. Hence the opinion before stated, that the distress of the poor in general has arisen from the circumstance of their wages not having been advanced, in proportion to the advanced price of provisions. This, for aught I know, may in some parts of the kingdom be really the case with the poor peasants or labourers in husbandry; and where it is so, deserves all the attention and consideration which these gentlemen most humanely plead for. But the augmentation of the legal parochial allowances by a general law, applying equally to all the poor, and alike enforced in seasons of plenty, and of temporary scarcity and distress; would, surely be a very ill advised measure; operating to increase the evils so strongly described by all the writers I have quoted; and founded, with respect to a great majority of the parochial poor, in a mistaken

a mistaken opinion. By far the larger proportion of these, are inhabitants of cities and great towns, and to them the fact does not apply.

It appears from the abstract of the overseers' returns to Parliament in the year 1776, as stated by Sir FREDERIC EDEN, (1st vol. p. 370) that the expense of supporting the poor for the whole county of Lancaster, then amounted to 52,220*l.* 0*s.* 11*d.* — The present disbursements for Manchester and Liverpool only,* (leaving the towns of Lancaster, Warrington, Preston, Wigan, Rochdale, Bolton, Bury, &c. &c. out of the account) will be found, I speak from actual information and printed accounts, to amount to nearly an equal sum. The expenditure for the whole county of Norfolk, amounted to 64,296*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.* — In 1797, for the city of Norwich only, to 30,245*l.* 9*s.* 11*d.* For the whole county of Warwick, 44,070*l.* 11*s.* 0*d.* — for Birmingham only, in 1796, 24,050*l.* 14*s.* 1*d.* $\frac{1}{2}$. and I believe it is now above 30,000*l.* The expenditure for that town only, amounted in ten successive years, to ONE HUNDRED and SIXTY-TWO THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED and EIGHTY-ONE POUNDS, THREE SHILLINGS and TWOPENCE; and

* Their disbursements in 1776, I believe have never been stated.

and in this short space the annual expenditure has been more than doubled. Let me here stop for a moment, to ask, whether policy or humanity dictate, that by increasing the parochial allowances generally, this immense burden, laid upon the sober and industrious, should be further swelled by so enormous an addition?

Whatever may be the case with the labourers in husbandry, the wages of the mechanic and artizan, of the smith, the bricklayer, carpenter, shoemaker, taylor, &c. have been very considerably advanced; and the wages of the manufacturer, miner, and collier, have been, and are, upon such a scale, as to produce a general complaint, that the great body of them cannot be prevailed upon to work half their time. To add to the parochial allowances of these men, experience has demonstrated, would not contribute to the more comfortable support of their families, or furnish a stimulus to vigorous exertion; but, on the contrary, increase their propensity to idleness and dissipation. The advocates for these allowances would also do well to recollect, that there is another party equally interested — the thousands and ten thousands of honest, industrious inhabitants of our cities and towns, who groan under the present burden of the annual tax, and would be undone by any further addition.

Were

Were these gentlemen to attend the levees of the overseer; were they to witness the bold and clamorous demands of sturdy mendicity, habitual intemperance, or improvident sloth; and inform themselves to what purposes the relief thus extorted was applied:—were they then to accompany the collector of the parochial tax, and behold with what difficulty it is wrung from many an honest and industrious tradesman, whose family is under the necessity of submitting to severe deprivations in consequence of this requisition:—they would be cured of their spurious humanity, and cease to recommend an indiscriminate increase of the parochial allowances. Were they further to undertake a general inspection of those narrow alleys and miserable dwellings, where the poor congregate in our cities and large towns; where the pure air is impeded and contaminated with noxious putrid effluvia, and these wretched victims of filth and profligacy remain exposed to every natural as well as moral evil; while their pale countenances and squalid appearance, undeniably evince the injurious effects that result from this complication of ills:—they would cease their *general* declamations against *all* parochial receptacles. I hesitate not to assert, that not all the positive evils incident even to the common parish workhouses, under the
miserable

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miserable management of *annual* overseers; will bear a comparison with those, to which the great mass of the *town* poor are exposed in their present abodes. — It is such experimental knowledge of the actual state of the great majority of the parochial poor, that alone can point out and lead to the most eligible means of ameliorating their condition.

Sanctioned by the foregoing concurring judgment of a BACON, a LOCKE, a HALE, a CHILD, &c. &c. may I not then go on to assert, that the remedy to be provided must consist in taking the management of the parochial fund out of the hands of annual overseers; and vesting it in a body of respectable governors, acting under such regulations with respect to their succession in office, as shall give them all the advantage of a permanent board: providing for the comfortable support of the aged and infirm; for the proper education of the young poor, particularly those orphans or natural children, who have no other than parochial guardians: and offering to the claimants for the parochial allowances that employment, the want of which is their general, though, in most instances, fallacious plea, for obtaining the same.

With

With regard to the annual overseers, there appears now to be such a general agreement of sentiment, respecting the pernicious consequences resulting from committing the disposal of the parochial funds into such hands; that it seems unnecessary to advance any further arguments in support of my first proposition. An act very lately passed, empowers parishes to appoint perpetual overseers with a salary; a measure strongly recommended by the worthy Mr. SAUNDERS, in his excellent practical treatise on this subject. But I much fear this would prove at best but a palliative, and might, in the hands of artful and selfish men, aggravate the disease. The individual, in this case, is exposed to the temptation of acting from personal considerations; and it is not to be expected that men would generally be found for such situations, of sufficient capacity, enlarged sentiments, and liberal views. A Board, constituted as I have before stated, acting upon a regular plan, adopting from time to time such a line of conduct as experience shall point out and direct; and meeting weekly to receive the applications of the poor, enquire into the cases that come before them, and superintend the whole of the parochial concerns; appears to be the best calculated for the correction of abuses; and carrying into effect that regular
d systematic

systematic plan, which alone can produce a radical cure for the evils complained of. In the conduct of such a Board, whose qualifications are respectable, and who act together, no harsh severity or illiberal treatment of the poor is to be dreaded on the one hand, or any improper waste or abuse of the parochial funds, on the other.

In *very many cases*, the aged and infirm poor, particularly those who have outlived their connections, and are left as it were alone in the world, like a withered leafless trunk in the midst of a desert, can only be comfortably provided for out of the parochial funds, in a poor-house. In *no case*, can the young poor, abandoned by their parents, or thrown upon the parish from their birth, be properly taken care of but in such a receptacle. Indeed the idea of distributing the whole of the parochial fund in weekly or other allowances to the poor at their own dwellings, is too absurd to be supported. It would double the parochial expenditure, and multiply all the evils complained of. It is surely, then, a great mistake, to indulge in indiscriminate abuse of all such establishments. They must of necessity continue to exist, in conjunction with the parochial allowances; and the zeal of the objectors would

would be more usefully employed, in suggesting such regulations as would correct every abuse to which they may be liable; and render them at once comfortable asylums for the aged poor, valuable seminaries for the young, and houses of reformation for the idle and depraved. I speak from experience, when I say, that this is practicable.

A much more arduous task would be to furnish employment for the great body of the poor. This has long been attempted by annual overseers without *permanent* success. The exertions of worthy and enlightened individuals, have indeed been attended with very important and valuable *temporary* advantages.* But it is very mortifying to observe, that their negligent, obstinate, or ignorant successors, have frequently in one short year wholly counteracted all their zealous and successful labours, and destroyed their fairest hopes.

To establish parochial manufactories throughout all the parishes in the kingdom for the employment of the poor at large; and especially

* See Mr. SAUNDERS's Treatise, of which I cannot speak in terms that would adequately express my esteem of his laudable and judicious exertions.

cially under the care and management of annual wardens or managers, subject to the direction and controul of any two visitors; — I speak with all due deference when I say — would, in my humble apprehension, prove a most expensive and ruinous undertaking. But it is consolatory to observe, that providing on this extensive scale for the general employment of the poor, does not appear to be necessary. And here it is, that experience holds forth information of the highest importance. Most true is the observation of DEFOE, that the large number of those poor who hang upon the parochial provision, is occasioned by those who *will not work*, not by those who *cannot procure it*. The comparatively small quantum of employment provided in the Houses of Industry established by incorporated parishes, has been found sufficient to check the frauds and impositions of those who upon this pretence laid claim to the parochial allowances.

Having at different times undertaken the management of liberal subscriptions for the purpose of supplying the poor in our united parishes at Shrewsbury with provisions at half price, during seasons of particular severity; I directed

directed books to be opened, in which were regularly entered the names of those who applied for the benefit of these benevolent contributions. In order likewise to proportion the quantum of relief to their respective exigencies, particular pains were taken by the parochial committees, to state from personal inspection the number each family consisted of. By this means I have been enabled to ascertain, that the whole amounted at least to seven thousand.* Yet out of this large body, the average annual number of poor in our House of Industry, has never reached four hundred; more than one third of whom have been children. The number, therefore, of those for whom we have found it necessary to provide employment, has been small indeed, when compared with the aggregate of our parochial poor. The fact is, that the great body of them, now finding that, by the natural operation of a regular system, the door is shut against fraud and imposition; that their idle excuses are of no avail; and that those who are able, must work, or starve; have chosen rather to labour for themselves than for the House of Industry: and they have found

also,

* Including the whole of the incorporated parishes, one of which is a country parish.

Also, that those who are disposed to work will seldom stand in need of employment. This is a most important fact, and leads to conclusions of infinite moment, with respect to the most eligible plan for correcting the abuses of the present system, and ameliorating the condition of the poor. One inference is so apparent, that he who runs may read it; namely, that we do not compel all our poor to come into the House, when they stand in need of parochial assistance. *Occasional relief* has been, from the first opening of the House, always administered to them at their own dwellings: and, in those cases which require *continued assistance* — we **DISCRIMINATE**. This is the grand hinge upon which every plan of parochial reform ought to turn. Indiscriminate allowances, and indiscriminate confinement to a Poor-House, are equally absurd and injurious. But an establishment providing employment for those poor, and those only, who cannot, or will not procure it; a House of Industry, with spacious airy apartments, kept strictly clean, and under regulations that enforce moderate labour, sobriety, decency, and good order; where the aged poor are treated with tenderness, and the young trained up in habits of diligence, and instructed in the principles

ciples of religion, morality and virtue; I will venture to affirm, is the *germ*, from whence all improvement in the parochial system must originate. Away then with all that vague declamation, all that *indiscriminate* abuse, which has been heaped upon these institutions. It does not apply. — It is a caricature, that distorts their every limb and feature; and converts their fair and comely proportions, into uncouth and monstrous forms; — gorgons and chimeras dire! — They are not those “slaughter-houses,” those seats of a “government more despotic, than any that prevails between Gambia and the Ganges,” which mistaken men have described.

Entertaining, as I most firmly do, such sentiments of the great importance and utility of these establishments when properly conducted; and confirmed, as I am, in those sentiments, after taking no small pains to inform myself of all the objections that have been advanced against them; I cannot refrain from expressing myself thus warmly on the subject. But that this may not appear to result from that fond predilection all men are prone to entertain for their own opinions, and the favourite objects of their pursuit; I feel it to be necessary to advert to those objections, and state

state such replies as have operated to the entire conviction of my own mind, after having honestly endeavoured to divest myself of every prejudice and prepossession. Whether they will have the same effect upon my readers, I presume not to determine; nor have I a wish that they may make any further impression, than they may derive from their intrinsic weight in the scale of sound reason and impartial judgment.

It has been alledged, that where the poor are crowded together in these houses, the effect must be prejudicial to their health.

Whatever might have been the case in the infancy of these establishments, the objection does not apply to any of those erections that are of recent construction. They are built upon a large scale; in eligible, airy situations; the apartments are lofty and well ventilated; the poor are well fed; and obliged to conform to those regulations which enforce sobriety, cleanliness, and decency; they have medical assistance when ill, and a diet adapted to their complaints. Can it be conceived, that in such situations they are liable to equal mortality, as in their own filthy, confined, and miserable dwellings? *particularly the town.*

Introductory Observations. XXXVII

man poor. I beg leave here to quote a paragraph from one of my former publications: "The average number of paupers in our House for the last year has been 340; the number of deaths 29. If it had been 30, it would have been one in 11; of these 29, two were ninety years old; three, eighty; ten, upwards of seventy; five fell victims to venereal habits; one died of a cancer; one a maniac; and one a poor vagrant, who had been ill-treated in a country parish." I insert this quotation for the purpose of inferring therefrom, that no fair or just inference can be drawn from the proportional number of deaths in a House of Industry, respecting their general effect upon the health of the poor. "The poor," says Mr. ROGERS, "who take refuge in a House of Industry, are so reduced by poverty as not to be able to maintain themselves and their families; consequently, the constitution, both of parents and children, must have been debilitated by want of necessary food, &c. so that none can be said to be admitted in sound health; no estimate can therefore be made of their chance of life, in comparison with the inhabitants of villages, towns, or cities in general." Mr. HOWARD, the strenuous opposer of these establishments, has admitted, that "as these places are the common

common receptacles of the aged, the infirm, and the distempered, the general mortality may be considerably higher than what takes place among the poor at large, without the smallest imputation upon their salubrity. No fair comparison," he admits, "can be instituted but with respect to the children."

In my correspondence with that gentleman I stated, that out of 91 born in the Shrewsbury House, two only had died therein, and two more out at nurse, all at the age of two months; two or three more at the age of three or four years; but after they were taken out of the House. Upon acting again in the Direction, I found reason to apprehend, from omissions in other parts of this record, that the register had not been accurately kept; and upon the change of our house-steward I caused a fresh book to be opened, containing a register of births and deaths *only*; (before, it included other particulars;) and I can now state with perfect confidence, from my own personal inspection and attention to the accuracy of this register, that from the 10th of December, 1798, when it was first opened, up to the 23d of December, 1799, twenty three children have been born in the House, only one of whom has died. In a majority of the houses, enumerated by Mr. RUGGLES, the mortality has been upon a smaller scale.

scale than even in the Shrewsbury House; and in those of the others where the greatest mortality prevailed, it is recorded that it was in consequence of small pox, or epidemical fever.

It has been urged that the inhabitants of these houses are in a dreadful situation, when any infectious disorder breaks out among them. — By no means so bad an one as in their own crowded and miserable dwellings in our towns. But this objection is completely obviated by providing a detached building, or lazaretto, at a sufficient distance from the house to prevent the communication of the disease. This makes a part of the Shrewsbury Establishment, and ought to be attached to all others. With respect to the small pox, we always inoculate at regular stated periods, and have very rarely lost a single patient.* This conclusion then appears to me to be undeniable — that if due care be taken in their construction, (which may be provided for by law) and due attention paid to cleanliness; the natural operation of these Establishments, instead of increasing mortality among the poor, will be to restore health, and prolong life.

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* The children of the out-poor are at the same time inoculated in their own dwellings; I mean those of them whose parents chuse to take the benefit of this provision.

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It is *possible*, indeed, that by not proportioning the scale of the building to the number of its inhabitants; and by crowding them into small, close, and dirty apartments; a House of Industry *may* be rendered a miserable Hospital, increasing wretchedness, and generating disease. But are we from hence to infer, that the Institutions themselves are pernicious; and that the aged and infirm poor, the natural and orphan children, together with those whom the labour of their parents cannot support; the sturdy mendicant likewise, and the idle, vicious profligate, who extorts the parochial relief under the fallacious pretence that he cannot procure employment, and then applies it solely to the gratification and indulgence of his intemperance and excess; that all these different classes must continue to be consigned to the common parish work-houses, where it is generally impossible to enforce cleanliness and decency; and where all the evils complained of are multiplied a hundred fold? Or, are we at once to shut up all these receptacles, and allow all these claimants on the parochial bounty to live at large on weekly stipends; and pursue no measures calculated to improve their morals, to check their numberless frauds and impositions, and compel those who are able, but idle, to labour for their

their support? Are we quietly to sit down lamenting all the evils which notoriously exist, and daily multiply, in the parochial system; and the growing burdens of the parochial taxes, increasing in their amount as we have seen in nine years, from 1776 to 1785, nearly half a million per annum; and from 1785 to the present time, *another million per annum more?* *—It is surely sufficient barely to state these queries, in order to point out the weakness and absurdity of that general declamation which has been directed against these establishments. It has been demonstrated, by actual experiment, that they *may* be rendered salutary receptacles for these different classes of the poor; would it not then be a much more useful employment, to point out such regulations, and suggest such measures of precaution, as may check or prevent those evils, to which, in common with all other human institutions, they may be exposed?

Another objection, that has been held hold of for the purpose of displaying the talents of these writers in pathetic eloquence, has been, the cruelty of compelling the poor to abandon their own dwellings, and * enter into

* Sir F. M. EDEN, vol. I. page 25, 131 note, 363 and 371.

into these legalized prisons; ousting them from those cottages, where, in the humble pride of domestic authority, in the endearments of family union, in a property from joint labour, and in freedom of person, they seemed to dissolve the old alliance of wretchedness and poverty." — If such were indeed the inevitable consequence, or is in any instance the authorized abuse, of these establishments, I should freely abandon them to all that execration they would deserve. But these gentlemen are surely not aware, that policy at least, if not humanity, must operate upon the Directors of these Institutions, in direct opposition to such a practice. If the poor cottager, — that I may argue the point with these gentlemen on their confined and limited view, of the parochial poor — if the poor cottager, in a season of temporary distress, applies only for occasional relief; it is not for the interest of the parish, or incorporation of parishes, to compel him and his family to come into the House, for the purpose of being entirely supported at their expense. It appears from the great body of information collected by Sir F. EDEN, that much clear profit is not to be expected from the manufactures of a poor house. Such a succession of imperfect workmen, taken, as they ought to be, and are, from this employment,

ment, as soon as they are able to earn their own support, cannot be expected to render a manufactory a profitable concern. I acknowledge, I had once more sanguine expectations on this head. It will always therefore be for the interest of such establishments to allow *occasional* relief to the poor at their own dwellings.

The benefit derived from furnishing employment for the poor, is obtained in a different way. — It operates as a powerful check to the frauds and impositions of the out-poor. And here, the advantage is very great indeed. In the beginning of the year 1798, I received an application from the united Vestries of the Bath Parishes to visit them, for the purpose of communicating to them any information in my power, respecting the establishment of a House of Industry, which they had then in contemplation. They furnished me with the parochial accounts of the preceding year, and I attended some of their work-houses on the pay-days. I was astonished at the general appearance and description of those poor who received weekly allowances. It appeared from their accounts, that the *total* amount of their joint disbursements (exclusive of the parish of Walcot) was 286*l.* 3*s.* 3*d.* more, than those of the united Parishes at Shrewsbury the year
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prior to the establishment of our House of Industry; but their disbursements to the out-poor, amounted to 3111*l.* 6*s.* 10*d.* while ours, for the same year, 1797, did not amount to 500*l.*

Yet,

* See Address to the Bath parishes, printed by CRUTTWELL, and sold by DILLY. Undoubtedly, if a House of Industry had then existed at Bath, a part of the difference between the two sums stated, would have gone to defray the increased expensures of their poor-house; the family in which would have been enlarged by the admission of a certain proportion of their weekly pensioners. It is not reasonable however to presume, that under the present defective system (which disables them from adopting a regular plan for the employment of the poor) the same abuses and impositions do not take place at Bath, which have been allowed to exist everywhere else. Indeed, from my own personal observation and enquiry, I cannot myself possibly entertain the smallest doubt of it. The labour of their poor in the house would also have contributed towards the expence of their support. And from the operation of their joint causes, together with the other economical regulations adopted in Houses of Industry, I am fully persuaded that a most important saving might have been effected. I never yet met with a place, where the labour of the female poor could be employed with more advantage to the parishes, or less expence in providing the necessary materials, than at Bath. — I add this note, from a sincere desire to guard against deceiving by any fallacious statement, which on the present subject would deserve the most severe reprobation.

The United Parishes of Bath and the Town of Bath.

Yet, to the out-poor in cases of real distress, our allowances of occasional relief *at their own houses*, are upon a much more liberal scale, than when it was obtained from the annual overseers. — Can there be a more striking, or more convincing proof, of the great advantage resulting from being able to hold out employment to poor applicants; or, in consequence, of the great benefit and utility of these Establishments?

With respect to the applications both for this *occasional* relief, and for more *permanent* assistance,

There are no vagrants more completely versed in the *science* of beggary, than those who frequent the streets and avenues of Bath. A poor miserable looking wretch petitioned a gentleman one day, while I was there, for a recommendation to the infirmary. She took this recommendation to a public house, where she got her belly full of meat and drink; and then tendering bad silver to pay the publican, left her recommendation in pawn, whilst she pretended to go for the purpose of getting her money exchanged. Another gentleman coming down Hollow-way in the dusk of the evening, overheard the following conversation: — “Well, Jack! what luck to-day?” — “D—d bad, I have only got three shillings.” — “I have done better, look here is seven and sixpence; come, we’ll go and have an alderman.” The gentleman’s curiosity was so much excited, that he ventured to ask what they meant by an alderman? — “An alderman, sir,” says the fellow, “why it is a boiled turkey and oyster sauce.”

assistance, as I before observed, the Directors DISCRIMINATE; that is, they allow to the former that assistance which they judge the respective circumstances of each case requires; and to the latter, either relief at their own dwellings, or admission into the house. If aged paupers have children or friends disposed to take proper care of them, and are arrived at the decline of a life spent in honest industry, they allow that aid to their friends which enables them to pass the evening of their days in *those* dwellings, and *that* society, which long habit and tender connections have endeared to them. If they are without such kind friends, and incapable of taking proper care of themselves, they are taken into the house, where they are treated with tenderness, and assisted by nurses, appointed for the apartments in which they are placed.

I trust my readers will now give me credit for the assertion, that this DISCRIMINATION forms the grand hinge, upon which every plan of parochial reform ought to turn. And in whose hands can it be so well, or so safely placed, as in those of a Board of respectable directors, meeting weekly to take into consideration the cases of the poor applying for relief? Such a line of conduct obviates
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all the objections that have been brought against these establishments, and demonstrates, that true policy and humanity, both require that they should be duly *regulated*, but by no means *abolished*; and that, *subject to such regulations*, every possible public and parliamentary encouragement ought to be held out to them.

One *general* rule of the Shrewsbury Institution, though subject to the same *discriminating* application, may perhaps at the first glance appear exceptionable: I mean, that of relieving large families, by taking a part of the children into the house. But this is not that kind of separation, which dissolves the endearing ties of parental and filial connection; any further than they are dissolved when youth are boarded at a school for education. The parents are allowed to visit them, and they may visit their parents; at least weekly, for they leave off work every Saturday afternoon at three o'clock. They are also allowed stated holidays, which they may spend at home. Here then also, *regulation*, and not *abolition*, is the proper measure. Yet, though the indulgencies I have stated will ever remain in unison with the tender chords of humanity; the rigid moralist may be disposed to plead

in this case, for a more compleat separation.

The ground-work, he may urge, of all reformation among the parochial poor, must be laid in education. Among the *town-paupers*, the great majority are dissolute and depraved. To allow then of this mutual and continued intercourse, is to counteract all the pains that are taken in the parochial seminary to eradicate bad habits and principles, and plant good ones in their room. In deciding on this interesting question, the heart and the head of the benevolent man, may possibly be at variance. Perhaps it is wisest, to allow a respectable board to exercise their own discretion.

If this important branch of parochial reform remain wholly unattended to, what is to be expected but that a total dissolution of all principle, and a general depravity and corruption of manners, will take place in this numerous and important class of the community? "*A fortiori*," says Mr. RUGGLES, "the children of those who receive their maintenance from the property of the State, are the children of the State. Government has an undoubted right, on every principle of nature and justice, to direct in some measure the education of those children, whose parents are chargeable to society. — Industry, early industry,

industry, keeps the rising age from present mischief, and fashions the future man to a life of honesty; and depend upon it, the religious principle, together with every respected moral virtue, may be reared on the basis of habitual industry. — How excellent must that plan be, which would comprehend, and in a manner insure, the future well-being of so large a portion of this nation; would deliver them from a childhood and youth, passed in idleness and theft; to a manhood formed from the earliest years to habits of industry?" This reasoning applies equally to *Houses* of Industry, as to *Schools* of Industry; and, I humbly conceive, with much more force to the former than to the latter; since the probability of a reform in their principles and manners, is much greater when they are not in the way of imbibing daily, both from precept and example, the vicious practices of their depraved progenitors.

It has been objected, that "the powers vested in the Directors of Houses of Industry, are thereby wrested from the old description of officers — mayors, justices, and overseers." — What are those powers? — Has not the magistrate still authority to interpose and redress any well-founded complaints? Has he ever been accustomed to direct the precise quantum of parochial

I. *Introductory Observations.*

parochial relief that shall be granted to each applicant? Is it possible, that a mayor or justice in a populous city or town, should attend to the daily exercise of such a power? Have they ever been in the habit of so doing? Has not the individual overseer, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, acted according to his own caprice or discretion, in the distribution of the parochial fund? and is not the abuse of that discretion the subject of universal complaint? The assertion with respect to the magistrate, is not founded; with respect to the overseer, it is. But to whom is it transferred? — from the individual overseer to a board of twelve or twenty Directors, whose qualifications, in point of fortune, *must be respectable*, meeting weekly to investigate each case that is brought before them; and acting to every intent and purpose as a body of overseers. And may not all the power that is vested in the Board of Directors, be as safely lodged in their hands, as in that of any individual? The only authority they solicit beyond that of the old overseer, is that which is necessary for the good government of the house; and to their honour be it recorded, that since the first establishment of houses of industry, *the rigid and strict scrutiny of their inveterate opposers, has not been able to point out a single instance* of

of their abuse of that power. But, — “they have been allowed to inflict corporal punishment.” — They will have no objection to give up that power. Its only object was, to enforce that good order and subordination, without which, three, four, or five hundred parochial poor, forming one family, could not be prevented from rendering it a scene of wild uproar, riot, and confusion. To prevent, however, the bare possibility of abuse, let the offenders be consigned to the authority of the magistrate. Yet, if I am not mistaken, this power was allowed, and exercised, in the old Work-houses, under the old parochial laws. I beg leave here to refer my readers to the opinions of Sir FRANCIS BACON, and Sir F. M. EDEN, respecting the government of the magistrate, as quoted in page xii. But,—“the overseers are subject to fines, while to the Directors, it is stated, this provision does not attach.” — How ignorant is this objector, of the laws by which houses of industry are governed? No director can retire, or remit his attendance at the weekly boards, without subjecting himself to a heavy fine; renewable for every renewed offence. — “Respectable gentlemen,” it is said, “may grow weary of a duty they are not *compelled* to persevere in; and then, unlettered and inferior persons will probably

probably creep into the direction, who, from defect of judgment, or want of principle, will fatally derange the fancifully perfect establishment." — Again this objector is grievously mistaken. Each director is *compellable* to serve, when returned by the parishioners, and elected out of those returns by the existing board; as well as *compellable* to persevere in that service, during his period of acting. — "Instead of providing better for the poor," it has been said, that "the operation of houses of industry tends to augment their distresses, by adding to the powers of task-masters, and introducing a system of coercion that must degrade, debilitate, and unnerve them for every desirable, social, or political purpose." — If to compel the idle, profligate, and abandoned, who clamourously demand and extort the parochial allowances, drawn out of the pockets of the sober and industrious, to moderate labour, sobriety, and decency, *be* a system of degrading coercion, then indeed houses of industry must plead guilty to this high-sounding charge. But even in that case, as soon as these pests of society feel themselves disposed to labour for their own support, they obtain their emancipation, and have free leave to quit these "dreadful prison-houses." And, whether a system, whose natural tendency is, to correct their
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their vicious propensities, and induce habits of industry and decorum, be *indeed* a system of degrading coercion, the natural tendency of which is to debilitate and unnerve them, the candid reader will determine. This, and several other similar objections, proceed upon the mistaken idea, that the plan of these establishments is "to force all claimants into one place." This indeed would be a "radical objection:" but my readers must have seen how miserably mistaken these objectors are, in their crude ideas of the system by which Houses of Industry are conducted.

Another objection of much more seeming plausibility is, that these parochial houses, where the profligate and depraved, the vagrant, and the abandoned female, form so considerable a part of the family, must of course be very improper seminaries for the education of the young poor: and that it must be a dreadful punishment to the modest and deserving pauper, to be consoled with such companions. — This depends upon regulation. The working rooms, the dormitories, the schools, the tables at which they dine, and even the ground where our young poor are allowed to amuse themselves in the open air; are all detached from those occupied by
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the other paupers. A complete separation of the sexes takes place among all but the married poor. They are separately classed in the dining hall, their sitting rooms are at opposite ends of the house, and they ascend to their dormitories by separate stair-cases. The bedrooms are always locked up during the day. The women of bad character, are now, to my unspeakable satisfaction, placed in a detached building at a bow-shot distance from the house, with which they are not allowed any communication. In addition to these precautions, the situation of the poor in the house compels sobriety and diligence. They have proportionate allowances from the amount of their earnings, to encourage them to industry; but those allowances do not put it in their power to indulge in intemperance and excess. Prayers are read morning and evening in the dining-hall before breakfast and supper, and they are obliged to retire early to rest. The aged, and more respectable poor, are accommodated by themselves, in a sitting room and ward for the men, and others for the women, each attended by a nurse, and kept perfectly clean and decent. Profane and immoral discourse, riotous and disorderly behaviour, are strictly prohibited; and the offenders punished, in the first instance, by
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being deprived for a limited time of their gratuities ; and for repeated offences, by solitary confinement ; * while on the other hand, diligence and good conduct are rewarded by distinction of dress, and other douceurs. It is very true, that if all the parochial claimants were compelled to come into the house, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to counteract their vicious propensities. But the deserving poor, receiving temporary and occasional relief in their own dwellings ; and the discipline I have described operating as a powerful discouragement to the vicious and abandoned, who cannot bring themselves to submit to a life of sobriety, industry and decorum, the *settled* residents are either children, the aged and infirm, or the modest, but unfortunate, incapable of labouring for their own support. The adults are all discharged, upon application to the board, when they can maintain themselves ; and the children, (except those that are cripples, idiots, or distempered,) are regularly apprenticed out, when they arrive at a proper age.

Such is the great importance of regulation, and such the inestimable advantages
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* Not to be continued for each offence, above a single day.

resulting from DISCRIMINATION, in the distribution of the parochial allowances.

May I now be permitted to call upon the enemies of these establishments, to point out a plan, by which the parochial fund can be applied with more beneficial appropriation to the relief of its proper objects; or to the advantage of the young poor: or, by which, a more effectual check can be interposed, to the frauds and impositions of the idle and undeserving.

And by a steady, uniform perseverance in such a line of conduct, great pecuniary advantages *may* also be derived to incorporated parishes from these institutions. This brings me to the last objection of any moment that occurs to my recollection.

It has been stated, that "instead of relieving the industrious part of the community, or abating parochial burdens; they tend greatly to injure the one, and *inevitably* to add to the other in an alarming degree: and that though at first they appeared to succeed to admiration, they are no longer thought to answer the good ends expected from them."

They are supposed to "injure the industrious, by interfering with their respective employments." But supposing that all poor-houses

houses were abolished, must not their present inmates, either execute an equal quantity of work, or be maintained in idleness at the expense of the industrious? And has it ever been found in a single instance, that the work executed in a house of industry, *has* injured the employments of the poor in their respective vicinage? The effect with us is directly the reverse. We put out flax for the poor to spin at their own houses, which, with our woollen yarn, is manufactured into linseys for the cloathing of the family: and thus our manufactory, so far as that article extends, instead of interfering with, furnishes employment for, the out-poor: and thereby precludes the necessity of supporting them in idleness.

It is a more serious objection, that some of these establishments "do not now succeed to that admiration, which was the case at their out-set." But here, the objectors have held up a very partial view of the matter. * The houses at Melton, Gressingham, Heckingham, Tatingstone, &c. are pointed out as "weighty warnings, strongly enforcing the propriety of rejecting any attempt to establish
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* I beg here to be understood as not alluding to Sir F. M. EDEN, whose candour, liberality, and disinterested zeal, very far transcend my feeble praise.

similar institutions:" but no notice is taken of the much larger number of those houses that have succeeded, and are in the actual possession, and enjoyment, of the most important advantages.

At Blything, a Debt of 12,000*l.* has been paid off, and at the same time the poor's rates reduced one eighth.

At Musford & Lothingland, } 6200*l.* borrowed, 2000*l.* paid off, and the rates remain as in 1781, when they were advanced ten per cent. but 300*l.* of the debt is paid off annually.

At Wangford, 4000*l.* debt paid off, number of poor in the house about 200, yet their annual income from rates, but 1750*l.*

The hundred of Samsford, } 2450*l.* of debt paid off, and the rates remain as in 1766.

The hundreds of Bosmere & Claydon. } 7294*l.* of debt paid off, the rates remain the same.

The hundred of Cosford &c. } The original debt of 8000*l.* reduced to 180*l.* the poor's rates reduced three-eighths, and a considerable fund in hand.

The

The hundred of Stew. } 1500l. debt paid off, the rates remain now the same as at first.*

The Parish of St. John's, Southwark. } The concerns of the poor in this parish, have been conducted for the last twelve years by a board of directors or governors appointed by a special Act of Parliament; and the parish is so populous, that under this management, it may be regarded as perfectly similar to the incorporations which take place in houses of industry. When their Act was obtained, the poor's rates were as high as six shillings in the pound, with a debt of five or six hundred pounds. The rates have never since exceeded half a crown.†

At Shrewsbury. Extract of a petition from the inhabitants of Shrewsbury to Parliament, in 1796. " In the purchase of the necessary lands, buildings, implements, and machinery, for our House of Industry, there has been expended near eight thousand pounds. By means of this establishment, the aged and infirm poor have been comfortably provided for; the young trained up in habits of industry and decency; a stop has been put to the great frauds and abuses that prevailed in the parochial

• RUGGLES.

† See Mr. SAUNDERS'S Observations, page 170.

parochial expenditure; and those poor who laboured under temporary distress or disability, have been more liberally assisted and relieved in their own dwellings, than was before found practicable.

" And while the poor themselves have derived these important benefits from this institution, your petitioners have also been very considerably relieved from the heavy and growing burden of the parochial taxes; the poor's rates for these united parishes, having, ever since the commencement of this undertaking, been reduced upwards of one-third: the amount of which reduction, in the term of twelve years subsequent to this establishment, being nineteen thousand three hundred and fifteen pounds thirteen shillings and sixpence. And this very considerable reduction has taken place, notwithstanding the farther charge of more than two thousand pounds upon the said rates, for the erection of bridges thrown down by violent inundations, the maintenance of the families of men serving in the militia, and the parochial levies for the army and navy. We are well convinced that these combined and inestimable advantages, have arisen from the good management of the Board of Directors, appointed under the special Act granted for this Establishment. The qualifications

qualifications required have rendered that Board respectable; the number of Directors secured the advantage of combined judgment and due deliberation; effectually prevented the abuse and oppression of the poor; and, from the particular form of their constitution, enabled them to act with the advantage of practical knowledge and experience in the duties of their office.

Your petitioners therefore pray, &c. &c."

After enumerating the particulars I have stated respecting all the Houses of Industry herein mentioned, except those in Southwark and Shrewsbury; Mr. RUGGLES proceeds to contrast the comfort and benefits enjoyed by their poor inhabitants, with the situation of the sick cottager, and the miserable pauper in a parish work-house; and then states the three following important queries, respecting Houses of Industry.

1. Have these institutions amended the morals of the poor?

2. Have they tended to diminish the burthen of expense to society attending their relief and maintenance?

3. Have they increased, or do they decrease, the chance of human life?

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The first query, he says may be answered in the affirmative without a possibility of contradiction: and states that the proportional few instances of indictments for acts of inferior criminality, prove the fact in a remarkable manner, as does likewise the general good order and regulation of the labouring poor in the incorporated districts, together with their respectful and civil behaviour to their superiors, and the very rare instances of the commission of those petty thefts so generally frequent among the children of the cottage poor.

The second query, — Whether Houses of Industry tend to diminish the expense of the relief and maintenance of the poor? he considers likewise as decided in the affirmative, after fully and fairly stating the good or the bad success of all of them. And here he introduces the following very important remarks, as applicable to this interesting question.

That, when the average at which these parishes settled their rates at the time of their incorporation, and the number of years that has since elapsed, are considered; and compared with the advance of the poor's rate during this period throughout the kingdom in general,

and

and the county where these houses are situated in particular, (which he proves, in an instance perfectly applicable, to have been 25 per cent.) it will be found that the most unthrifty management (such as in the instances quoted by the objectors) has been in fact a state of positive prosperity, and reduction of expense; and that even in those instances, the revenues of the houses are increasing beyond their disbursements, the debt is diminishing, and the rates will fall, even below that low medium they have hitherto preserved, which rates, had there been in those places no house of industry, would probably have risen 25, or even 50 per cent.

Here, then, this important query might be allowed to rest, confiding in the decision of every candid and impartial enquirer.

But it seems proper to advert a little more particularly to those instances where success has not been so conspicuous or permanent. They do indeed furnish "important warnings," but of a different nature to those stated by the objector. — They point out the bad consequences that must ensue from relaxing in that regular attendance, and attention, which will ever remain a necessary and im-

portant part of the Director's duty.* In every case, success is apt to beget confidence, and blind security: these are commonly followed by carelessness and neglect; and such is the nature of these establishments, that this will ever be succeeded by a diminution of those advantages, which continued vigilance would have insured. Another very great mistake is apt to creep into the management of these institutions. After successive years of prosperity, it is *presumed*, that the advantages have been principally owing to the good conduct and management of the officers and servants employed. This produces implicit confidence, — an error pregnant with the most pernicious consequences. By degrees, every thing is suffered to fall into the hands of these domestic officers, who never fail to improve the advantage, till they have wrested from the Board the whole internal government and management of the house. Then, relaxed discipline, and increased expenditure follow of course; and with these, a rapid declension of every advantage which *had* been acquired, and *might* have been rendered permanent and secure. "When the Directors become careless," says the excellent M. VOGHT, in his account of the Hamburgh Institution, "the whole

* See Appendix.

whole administration falls into the hands of under officers, who afterwards know so well how to embroil the business, that no subsequent Director is ever able to unravel the clue."

But this evil is not peculiar to these establishments. *All*, of every nature, and every kind, are alike exposed to it. And as well may it be said, that the best concerted plan of police ought not to be adopted, because individual magistrates *may* neglect to enforce it; as that these establishments ought not to be encouraged, because particular boards *may* become remiss in the discharge of their important duty.

By judicious regulations, matters may be so ordered, that the duty of a Director may be fully discharged in the short space of four or five hours per week, during the time of his acting in the direction; and what man is there so lost to all sense of his duty as a member of society, so little impressed with a conviction of the interesting and beneficial consequences that will result from the faithful execution of a well concerted plan, for improving the morals, and ameliorating the condition of the poor, as to neglect any single

single opportunity of devoting so small a portion of his time, to a purpose so unspeakably important?

The hours which the Director thus employs, will tell well, when he himself comes to make up his last account.*

I cannot here resist the strong inclination I feel, to do justice to the conduct of a gentleman at present in the direction for the Shrewsbury House. The parish in which he resides nominates one person annually of the eight returned to the board, out of whom four are chosen to succeed to the direction. Though not necessary, it was very properly thought a piece of respect particularly due to this gentleman, to wait upon him previous to the parochial nomination, and solicit his consent. With that zeal for the public welfare, which has strongly marked the whole of his conduct through life, he very readily complied with their request; and had no sooner entered into the direction, than he diligently applied himself to obtain every information respecting the state and concerns of this establishment.

The

* With respect to Mr. RUGGLES's third query, I have in the preceding pages argued the point at large.

The board were soon after indebted to him for a most admirable report, which is recorded in their journals. His attendance at the weekly boards is exemplary; and the whole of the united parishes are under the highest obligations to him, for his zealous support and co-operation in the reform of those abuses, which, in consequence of a very mistaken, implicit confidence in the domestic officers of the house, had crept into the management of its internal concerns. That enlightened judgment, and steady zeal, which enabled him to conduct the affairs of a very important and extensive province of the British Empire, with such singular felicity, as to obtain the united applause of men who widely differed in their sentiments and views, and which has been deservedly crowned with the general admiration and esteem of his country; has been applied with peculiar advantage, to promote the prosperity and success of this valuable establishment. — The gentleman to whom I allude, is Sir CHARLES OAKLEY, Bart. late Governor of Madras.

When men who have so honourably distinguished themselves in the service of their country, thus employ the hours of their retirement from public stations; — it is an injury to

to society; — it is incompatible with every noble and generous principle; not to hold up such characters for general imitation, as well as general esteem. The modesty which always accompanies genuine worth, will, I fear, take offence at an effusion that comes warm from a heart free from the bias often attending personal obligations, or selfish views. — The only apology I can offer is, that I strongly felt the propriety, and possible utility, of this feeble tribute, in connection with what I had before stated; and, — that the impulse was irresistible.

There is another important question, which, though it seems to have escaped observation, deserves however to be very seriously attended to: and that is, — Whether Houses of Industry are equally eligible for an incorporation of country parishes, as they are for those of towns? They have certainly succeeded, as we have seen, in several of the Suffolk districts, to a very high degree; and will no doubt succeed, wherever they are properly conducted and attended to. There are, however, peculiar advantages attending an incorporation of the town parishes. The Directors are nearer at hand, and can more conveniently attend the weekly Boards, than in the country, where

where they may have several miles to travel : a circumstance especially inconvenient in the winter, and which may at all times prevent that regular and constant attendance that is so essential. When the district or incorporation is of considerable extent, it may be useful to provide a larger, or even a double number of Directors, who may attend by rotation; taking care, however, that the whole of the acting Directors do not retire at once, but that one half of them remain, to furnish those who come in with the necessary information. That is, if the acting number be ten, for instance, five of them only shall retire at the stated periods, and five others enter upon their rotation.

The cottage-poor, *generally speaking*, are not in every respect such eligible objects for a Poor-house, neither are the numbers of those classes or descriptions which form our inmates, so considerable in the individual parishes. To bring together three, four, or five hundred of them, may require a very large extent of district, which will be liable to the inconvenience respecting attendance at the Boards, both to the Directors, the Overseers, and the paupers themselves, that I have just adverted to. It is likewise in cities and towns that the frauds and impositions of the parochial poor were particularly

particularly prevail; and there, of course, the advantage resulting from the check given to those practices by the regulations of a House of Industry, operate in every respect to much more advantage. At all events, it may be proper and necessary, to adopt in several respects such local regulations, as are particularly adapted to the respective situations of each incorporated district.

ON THE RELIEF OF THE POOR,
IN SEASONS OF PARTICULAR DISTRESS.

I have frequently heard it suggested, that the most eligible mode of relieving the *industrious* poor,* when their distress arises from an extraordinary advance in the price of necessaries, would be by levying an extra, or additional parochial assessment, during such emergencies. But this idea appears to me pregnant with the most serious evils.

In the first place, it would gradually undermine, and ultimately extinguish, that cardinal virtue, by which this country is so gloriously distinguished. Upon the same principle, the like fund ought to be resorted to, for the support of all our hospitals, and other charitable institutions. — To heal the sick, to
set

* I do not here mean the class of common parish paupers.

set the fractured limb, to pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind, — are not more necessary and important acts of charity, than to feed the hungry, or clothe the naked: but, would this forced loan, this extorted relief, wrung in ten thousand instances from the hand of poverty itself, deserve the appellation, or be entitled to the glorious rewards of charity? Would it operate, — as that godlike virtue does, — to expand the heart; to harmonize the affections; to humanize the temper; and to unite man to his fellow man, by that three-fold cord, that sacred band of union, which constitutes the grand cement of society? It may be said, that opulent and benevolent individuals would still have it in their power to contribute in aid of this fund by their voluntary donations. But when once this principle was resorted to, a thousand plausible pretences would operate to discourage, or disincline individuals, from contributing these auxiliary aids.

In the second place, this mode of raising a fund for such purpose, would be compelling the *poor* to contribute for the relief of the *poorer*. It would be a dreadful aggravation of the evils which already exist, from the enormous amount of the parochial assessments. It

would be levied at those times, when the pressure of the present burthen is peculiarly felt; and when the poor's rate, or the expence of relieving the parochial poor, is unavoidably, and very considerably increased, without this additional drain upon it.

Finally, it would destroy among the industrious poor themselves, a principle that is of infinite value and consequence to society. There yet remain among the labouring poor, a numerous body who feel a laudable ambition to support their families, without having recourse to parochial relief. In common seasons, their exertions are successful; and in times of scarcity, with the aid of these benevolent contributions, they contrive to subsist also, without giving up that independent spirit, which prevents them from hanging upon the parochial fund. But if once this spirit is broke in upon, and subdued; if ever they are compelled to class among the parish paupers, all their reluctance will vanish, and this inestimable principle will presently disappear.

There could not be a more injurious, impolitic, or ruinous measure, than a law for the general, indiscriminate increase of the parochial

parochial allowances.* Already, they destroy that stimulus to exertion, which ought to exist among the labouring poor; and every legal increase of those allowances, would proportionably increase this evil propensity. The measure I am opposing, would operate precisely in the same manner. It would take away that generous and animating motive, which rouses the labouring peasant and artizan to active industry; and encourage that idleness, which, in this class, is invariably followed by the abandonment of *all* principle, and which leads directly to profligacy, wretchedness, and ruin.

ON THE LAW OF SETTLEMENTS AND REMOVALS.

In addition to these general observations, I beg leave to add a few remarks on the law of settlements and removals; that fruitful and perennial source of parochial litigations. With respect to the former, I presume not to be a competent judge. It appears to me, however, to be an evil, necessarily attaching to the parochial provision, though if it be possible to simplify that law, it were a consummation devoutly to be wished.

With

* See page xxvi.

With regard to removals, several humane and valuable regulations have lately been enacted; but I humbly conceive that there still remains a further provision, which would be highly salutary and beneficial. If the parish to which a pauper's family is removed, see cause to apprehend that the settlement is not with them, but in a *third* parish, still they are obliged in the first instance to appeal against the order of removal: and this brings on an expensive litigation between two parishes, to neither of whom, it often turns out, the family belongs. Why may not the parish removed to, be allowed to remove again to a third parish, without prosecuting such an appeal? It may be replied, that the *third* parish may see cause to appeal, and the poor family be harassed by removals ad infinitum. But in a great number of instances this would not be the case, and all litigation be avoided; in many others, the dispute would ultimately rest between the two parishes where the actual ground of doubt existed; and the first parish, in which there was no pretence of settlement, would be exonerated. Such checks and regulations might likewise accompany the alteration proposed, as would prevent any abuse proceeding from it. As for example, that the removal, without appeal from the order, should
cease

cease with the third parish; or, that a discretionary power be vested with the magistrates to decide upon the propriety of a further removal, without appealing from the first order. A case in point, will shew the necessity of such a regulation.

A brick-maker brought a numerous family to reside in Shrewsbury, in order to obtain employment. Being an idle, drunken rascal, he presently deserted his family, and left them chargeable. Considerable expense was incurred by sending a constable in pursuit of him with a warrant, and bringing him back. The family were then removed by an order, to the parish where he swore his settlement to be. As soon as they arrived there, he told the officers that if they would allow him five guineas, he would take his family away and put them to no further expense. They acquiesced in his proposal, and he came back to Shrewsbury in a very few days. Before the Shrewsbury parish could apply for a pass to return them, notice of appeal against the order was given. A sessions trial ensued, and the order was reversed, upon proof that there were stronger grounds of settlement in a third parish; the court also ordered to the appellants, together with

with the usual costs, that they should be reimbursed the five guineas advanced by them to the pauper. Enquiry being then made in the third parish, they also declared their determination to appeal against any order of removal to them, and stated very probable grounds in support of their resolution. Here then, an expense of upwards of thirty pounds was incurred by the Shrewsbury parish, to which the pauper came a stranger, and had never done any act or deed, whereon the smallest pretence whatever could be grounded, for his settlement therein. Had the appeal been at issue between the second and third parishes, the question would have been tried between the parties where the real ground of doubt lay, and the second parish been put to no more expense, than they incurred by their appeal against the Shrewsbury order.

The law which requires that a parish should send an overseer with the paupers when removed by an order, is likewise productive of immense expense and inconvenience. A respectable tradesman, who leaves his business and travels across the kingdom with a pauper's family, expects to receive a considerable compensation; and I do not know of any law settling the allowance he shall be entitled

to

to claim. If I mistake not, there was a clause to that purpose inserted in the first printed copy of a late bill, but afterwards expunged, for what good reason I cannot conceive. There was also a clause in the late overseers' bill, empowering magistrates to send any person they thought proper to appoint, with the paupers removed; but this also was objected to, and struck out. Surely, the beadle of the parish, or any proper person appointed by the magistrates, might convey the paupers with as much effect, as a parish overseer: and might be employed for that purpose at much less expense. Indeed, when the removal is beyond a certain distance, I humbly conceive it would be a much more eligible mode to convey them from constable to constable — as by a Pass. The law has now provided, that they shall not be removed till they become actually chargeable, and thereby guarded against frivolous and vexatious removals; but as the poor in general resort to towns for the sake of employment, it is throwing a very unequal burden upon the town parishes, to compel them to remove in such cases, in so very expensive a manner: and it would be very much for the benefit of all towns, to unite their interest in obtaining a more equitable regulation.

The provision for suspending Orders of Removal during the sickness of a pauper, and charging the parish removed to with the expense incurred in parochial relief during that interval; is at once humane and equitable. — What a pity it is, that it should have opened a door to the most scandalous impositions! These might be considerably checked, by requiring the magistrate to call from time to time for professional information upon oath respecting the state of the pauper; and directing him to certify by indorsement on the back of the order, his allowance of weekly relief, together with the period of its commencement and cessation.

The late restrictions respecting Passes, are likewise productive of many injurious consequences. No person can be removed by a Pass, unless an act of vagrancy be proved, when he must first be sent to the house of correction and punished. How are parishes to proceed with the families of Irish or Scotch paupers? No Order of Removal can be obtained, because they have no parochial settlement; or if it could, the expense would be enormous. When in distress, they must be relieved, and very properly, as casual poor. But are the parishes where they fall into this predicament,

dicament, particularly by the death of the parent, to be for ever burdened with their support? It has been urged, that as towns, in such cases, have enjoyed the benefit resulting from the pauper's labour and residence, it is reasonable that they should bear the burden which may arise from the maintenance of the family. But this reasoning is fallacious. In a very great majority of these cases, the parties are itinerant paupers, who seldom reside long in the same situation. And what proportion does the benefit, resulting from a few months labour and residence, bear to the expense incurred by having a numerous family saddled upon the parish in perpetuity? Here also, a case in point will strongly mark the absurdity of this regulation.

An honest fellow with a family, who had been thirty years in the army, and was discharged upon account of ill health, with a certificate of good behaviour, came to reside in Shrewsbury with his wife and children, for the purpose of procuring employment. He met with an accident *soon after*, that disabled him, and was very desirous to return to his native place and connections in Scotland. He applied to the magistrate for a Pass, but was told he could not obtain one, unless he had committed

committed an act of vagrancy, for which he must first have been sent to prison. — The brave veteran replied, — “I am no vagrant; — I have supported my family as long as I was able; — I have served my country for thirty years, and was never once punished for misconduct; — I will not now go to prison as a criminal, without having committed any fault; but (and his faltering voice betrayed his inward anguish,) my pension will not support my young family.” — I happened to be present on this occasion, and trust my readers will give me credit for my indignant emotions. — I may be wrong, but I would, in such a case as this, have braved all the consequences of transgressing the *letter* of the law, convinced that I should not have infringed upon the *spirit* of it. It never could have been in the contemplation of the legislature, to have resisted so reasonable an application: and never was there a more striking instance of the truth and importance of that sage maxim, *Summum Jus est summa Injuria*. In many other cases, the natural operation of this severe restriction will be, to increase parochial litigations: an evil already of too great magnitude. In 1776, it amounted to an expenditure of 35,072*l.* *cs.* 8*d.*: in 1785, to 55,791*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* per annum. Passes I am told *may* be appealed

appealed against; Orders of removal (where there is good ground for appeal) *must*. In the former case, the true place of settlement is always found out without litigation; and an appeal against a Pass has scarce ever been heard of. The reason is, that the parish which paupers are passed to, may upon good grounds remove them by an Order, to their real settlement, without being compelled to appeal against the Pass; and thus, where any real cause of doubt arises, the question is agitated between those parishes only, where that cause exists. It might be provided, that paupers should never be passed from a parish where there was any ground of settlement; but that when there was no such ground, when the paupers were become actually chargeable, and when the place of settlement was in another county, Passes should be allowed.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

The inestimable advantages which may be derived from benefit clubs, or friendly societies, are so obvious, that it is scarce necessary to enlarge upon them. They counteract the pernicious tendency of the parochial relief. While the latter manifestly encourages idleness

ness and dissipation; the former operates as a stimulus to frugality and industry. The lower class have little prospect of being able, *individually*, to lay by a comfortable provision for a time of sickness or old age. But by entering into such societies, they *may* secure these inestimable advantages. How lamentable then is it, to see these valuable institutions perverted and abused! Yet such is really the case; and the general prevalence of these abuses, if not timely checked, will certainly operate to their total extinction. It has been thought necessary for the encouragement of these voluntary contributions, that each society should have the privilege of enacting their own bye-laws, which they may amend, alter, or repeal. And the consequence too frequently is, that the young members contrive to secure a majority, by virtue whereof, they enact fresh bye-laws that totally abrogate all the benefits, to secure which these societies were originally instituted. When the old members become numerous, and are compelled to draw upon the fund for their support; the young ones grow dissatisfied, and either agree to shut up their box, that is, for a time discontinue all allowances to their sick and disabled brethren; or, to dissolve the society, and divide the capital among the existing

ing members. Hence the aversion of the artful and designing, to register their associations, which would enable the magistrates to check their misconduct. The natural consequence of these abuses is, that the sober and industrious are discouraged from entering into these clubs. Too commonly also, their little capital is wasted by improvident purchases, or by being put out on bad securities.

It surely would be a most desirable object to place these societies on such a footing, as would secure to all their members the benefits they proposed to themselves, by devoting a part of their weekly earnings to the establishment of these funds: and I know of no method by which the liberal and benevolent can so effectually, or with less danger of perversion, under proper regulations, contribute to the general comfort and happiness of the great family of mankind.

It certainly would be sound policy, to furnish assistance out of the national fund for making good deficiencies, and enabling these associations punctually and honourably to fulfil all their engagements. It would connect them with the constitution and prosperity of their country, by a combination of the most powerful ties
that

that can operate upon the mind of man. To the parochial allowances, the poor themselves do not contribute. If these were to be increased ten-fold, they would only become more eager to obtain them; and, if their most unreasonable demands were not complied with, would feel no other emotions than those of resentment and discontent. But in the fund of a friendly society, the subscribers would all have a personal interest. They would feel their obligations to that Constitution, which increased and gave permanency to its beneficial stipulations; and, in case of necessity, would contend earnestly for the preservation and security of that capital, to which they themselves had been the principal contributors; and that parent state, to whose fostering bounty they were so much indebted.

Providing additional means of gratification to the idle and depraved, would be to administer fuel to their outrageous passions, and to augment their insatiable cravings. The more they thus acquired, the more ripe they would become for riot and revolt. But, holding out such a premium as I have proposed for the encouragement of provident industry, would not only secure the affections of those who are provident and industrious, but furnish a most powerful inducement for *all* to become so.

And

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And at all events, establish such an interest among the great mass of the people, as would oppose an insurmountable barrier against the open attacks of foreign, or the insidious encroachments of domestic foes.

It is by such a chart alone, that a good pilot will wish to steer the vessel of the state. And where such a band of union subsisted between the governors and the governed, provided it was not counteracted by those wild schemes of ambition or tyranny, which endanger all property and personal security; but, on the contrary, strengthened and cemented, by adopting that line of conduct which demonstrated that the *Salus Populi* was regarded and acted upon as the *suprema Lex*: a people thus united, would, with the blessing of Heaven, become invincible.

If such assistance were afforded to these voluntary associations, (for I do not plead for a compulsory law to enforce subscriptions) the public would have a right, by a general act, to enjoin those regulations, which would effectually prevent the abuses I have stated. In the mean time, were persons of fortune to become annual subscribers, they also would thereby secure the power of settling those arti-

ties and conditions, by which each respective society they subscribed to should be invariably governed: and their subscriptions, if the practice became general, would have a similar operation to establish such a fund, as would be adequate to all the claims that might be justly made upon it.

It has been apprehended, that such an interference would excite jealousy, and prevent those, for whose benefit these clubs are intended, from entering into them. But I cannot think that this would be the case. The object which every sober and industrious man has in view when he becomes a member, is to secure that provision in time of sickness and old age, which is the professed design of these associations: and to every such man, it would be an additional inducement to be assured that he shall not be disappointed. He will also have the further encouragement of obtaining, by means of such liberal assistance from those who do not intend ever to draw upon the fund, a more considerable allowance in time of distress, than he could otherwise have enjoyed. At the same time the laudable spirit of independence would be sufficiently gratified, by the circumstance of his having obtained a claim

claim to these allowances, in virtue of his own regular contributions.

Were the representatives of the people to allow an extraordinary interest on the capital advanced by these societies; and at the same time to provide in the most solemn manner possible, by a general law, for the security of the funds so vested; I humbly conceive that the most important advantages would be derived from the measure: and that, whatever jealousy or suspicion might for a short time take place, it would very soon disappear. The benefit would be immediately felt by the increased allowances; and this circumstance would greatly contribute to excite general confidence. My opinion in this respect, is in some degree sanctioned by experience. The Directors of the Shrewsbury House were early aware of the great advantage which would be derived from these institutions; and with a view to their encouragement, they offered to take their capitals at a higher rate of interest than they could then otherwise procure; giving them transferable bonds, pledging their estate, and the poor's rates, for the amount of the sums so advanced. At first, a natural jealousy was excited; but the punctual payment of their interest as soon as due, and

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of the principal likewise, whenever it has been demanded, together with the advantage derived from the higher rate of interest, has in a great measure removed every suspicion; and applications are now frequently made from these societies, tendering the surplus of their little funds. These are always complied with, and if the money is not wanted, the bonds of other creditors to the same amount, are taken up.

I beg leave here to recommend the plan of the society at Castle Eden, as stated in that very valuable publication, the "Reports of the Society for bettering the condition of the poor." The trustees are the Lord of the Manor, the Clergy and Justices. All annual subscribers of one guinea and upwards, are honorary members. Twelve of the principal inhabitants, together with the honorary members, are Directors for the time being. A committee, with a treasurer, steward, and clerk, are elected annually; Also, two visitors from each parish. Donations, as well as subscriptions, are received.

NATIONAL BOARD.

I most cordially concur with Mr. Saunders, in his recommendation of an established
national

national board, for attending to the concerns of the parochial poor. This Board should be empowered to demand from all the parishes in the kingdom, an annual statement of the amount of their poor's rates, and parochial disbursements, classed under all the heads and subdivisions necessary to furnish complete information. They should also collect accounts of the various friendly societies, the number of their members, the amount of their weekly, monthly, or annual subscriptions; of their allowances to the sick and disabled members; the number of years they have been established, and the state of their funds. They should likewise be authorised to call for a list of all parochial charities, and required to keep an exact register of the same in their books of office. They might be instructed to collect and arrange an account of the various plans that have been successfully adopted with regard to the diet, dress, and cloathing of the parochial poor: and they should be required to lay annually before parliament, a comprehensive report on the whole subject.

Were such an efficient Board appointed; and due care taken, that in the nomination of its members no party or private interest, no sinister or unworthy views, should be suffered

ferred to interfere; but that every individual officer should be fitted for his office, and not the office bestowed because it was convenient for the man: inestimable advantages would accrue. Such light would be thrown upon the parochial system, as would point out the most judicious, practicable, and efficacious measures, for correcting the evils which now exist in that system, and ameliorating, or, "bettering the condition of the poor."

The expense of such an establishment has been objected to. But the general distribution of that expense, would obviate the objection.

Under a prudent and economical plan, a tax of half a guinea per annum upon the smaller parishes, and from a guinea and half to two guineas upon the larger, throughout the kingdom, would produce an income fully competent; and there would, in more respects than one, be a peculiar propriety and advantage, in thus providing for the charge that might hereby be incurred.

Upon the whole, it is abundantly evident that it would contribute greatly to the success of any plan for the improvement of the parochial

chial system, that it was *voluntarily* and *cordially* adopted by the parties concerned; and that they were enabled to carry it into execution, without incurring any unnecessary or avoidable expense at the out-set. If therefore an act was passed to explain and amend the 22d. of Geo. the 3d. * to enlarge its provisions, and to empower — but not to compel — parishes to incorporate for the better relief, maintenance, employment, and education of their poor; under such judicious regulations and restrictions, respecting the allowance of occasional relief to the poor at their own dwellings, and the government of the incorporated poor-house, as the wisdom of Parliament

* The presumed deficiencies in this Act are, that the care and management of the poor is still to be ~~vested~~ in *annual* officers. Their power is subject to the same limitations with that of the present overseer. A single *visitor* may at any time controul their proceedings: a second visitor overturn the plan of the former; the relief of paupers remains at the discretion of an individual overseer or guardian. No other descriptions of paupers are eligible for admission but the old, sick, and infirm; orphan children, or those who go with their mothers for sustenance. Idle and disorderly persons, together with all those who claim relief on the ground of their having no employment, remain in the same situation as before, without any check to their impositions.

ment should suggest: — I am perfectly convinced that this would be found a most beneficial and salutary measure; combining those important objects, which all admit to be necessary, — a check to fraud and imposition; the proper education of the infant poor; necessary relief in seasons of occasional distress; and a comfortable provision and asylum for the aged and infirm.

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SOME ACCOUNT, &c.

THE complicated evils which exist among the Poor, and which result from the present defective system of our Poor-Laws, are now generally seen and acknowledged: and the very heavy and increasing burden of parochial taxes,—which is the natural consequence of these evils and defects,—is severely felt, and in many places become too intolerable to be any longer borne.

To a system of error so long and universally persisted in, and whose injurious effects have by imperceptible approaches deceived us into acquiescence, remedies, however simple, are applied with difficulty. The imagination
B shudders

shudders at enormities which are only known to us by description; whilst the same enormities, rendered familiar by habit, are viewed with indifference: and till men are roused into action by grievances no longer tolerable, the zeal of the reformer will be ineffectual. Hence, though speculative minds are able to suggest very plausible theories of reformation, yet, whilst indifference continues, they have the mortification to see them treated with neglect, or contempt. But the rapid and alarming Increase of the Poor's Rates in this, as in all other great Towns, at length became a subject of general disquietude; the former torpid acquiescence began to give way, and the plan I am about to describe was adopted. The account therefore on which I am now entering, is not a description of projects merely ideal, but of regulations reduced to practice, approved by the public, and sanctioned by experience.

Before, however, I proceed to those regulations, it will be proper briefly to state the following preliminary observations.

It

It is too evident, that whilst the poor are supported in idleness, they will be averse to labour: and the indolence thus encouraged, is the fruitful parent of that debauchery and depravity, and that consequent wretchedness and misery, which have made so fatal a progress among the lower orders of the community. Every caution will be relaxed, and every profligacy indulged, by men so disposed, from the consideration, that neither themselves nor their families can ever starve.* And whilst families thus neglected by those who ought to provide for them, are thrown upon the public; the children in those families, are left exposed to the worst examples. Brought up among the vicious and profligate, they must inevitably imbibe the contagion. Lying is the first lesson of their tongues, and theft too often the first exercise of their hands: every object they see is at war with decency, and every impression they receive, is a vice. Thus, instead of becoming, as they grow up, useful members of society, they add to the mals of those who are its burden, and its pest:

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* See Reports of the Philanthropic Society, to which I am indebted for several important Observations.

and the evil thus increasing in a *compound ratio*, threatens our country with calamities too shocking to be described.

Every effort made to check the general depravity by parish officers, has proved abortive. The object is too large for their grasp. It is necessary the attempt should be made upon a wider scale, with fuller powers, and upon a regular, permanent plan. To furnish employment for the poor, and compel them to earn their own support, has been found impracticable in parish workhouses, under the direction and management of those officers, who are annually chosen, and annually removed. Their own occupations afford them not sufficient leisure for that regular attendance and attention, which this would require when conducted by them alone.* Nor could the still more important object of training up the children of the poor to habits of industry and virtue be here attained. In these workhouses, as well as in their private dwellings, they are incorporated with the abandoned and depraved; and from the *same* cause, the *same* effect

* This objection applies with double force against the plan of the late Poor Bill.

effect will be invariably produced : which must continue to be the case, until they are regularly classed, and an absolute separation effected. Here, likewise, more care and attention are necessary, than are generally to be expected from parochial officers; and in both cases, the annual change of these officers commonly produces an annual change of plan. New measures are adopted, often founded in caprice, sometimes in self-interest, and almost always ending in miscarriage and disappointment; which, together with the additional charge attending these experiments, operates as a discouragement to all future efforts,

Much unnecessary expence is also unavoidably incurred, by committing the relief and management of the Out-Poor to annual officers. They are obliged to relieve, because they cannot employ. Unacquainted likewise with their poor when they enter upon their offices, they are the dupes of their fraud and artifice. And when they begin to acquire a knowledge of their characters and dispositions, they are superseded by others, as destitute of this necessary information as they were themselves. It may appear a *bold*, but perhaps will

will not be found a *groundless* assertion, that nearly one half of the money expended on the parochial poor is misapplied, in consequence of the want of this acquaintance with them, and experience of the artful stratagems they have recourse to, in order to extort undeserved relief. Whilst they can have their wants supplied without labour, they will most certainly remain idle; and to obtain this supply, they are naturally tempted to fabricate falsehoods, and impose themselves as objects of charity upon the officer or the magistrate. Indeed when their distresses *are* real, they are commonly produced by that idleness and dissipation, which their dependance upon this parochial relief encourages and promotes. Complaints of the cruelty and inhumanity of parish officers are, it is true, the hacknied topic of declamation: but it is a certain fact, that vast sums are expended upon undeserving artful cheats, who impose upon their credulity. Nor is it to be wondered at, if a discovery of these frauds should too often steel their hearts against that compassion, which ought always to be extended to every object in real distress.—It is a dreadful consequence of this defective system, that it ex-
poses

poses the deserving poor to the general suspicion; and gives to the clamorous counterfeit, what is denied to the modest claimant, reduced by unavoidable misfortunes to poverty and want.

The plain, simple remedy to these sore evils, as far as any remedy can be applied, seems to lie in the following particulars. To provide a comfortable asylum for the deserving poor, whom age, disease, or infirmity, have disabled from pursuing their various employments. A HOUSE OF INDUSTRY, under the direction of a board sufficiently numerous to attend to the various departments which will demand their care: and, by a well digested plan, and regulations maturely weighed, to introduce that *method and order*, which will greatly lighten the burden of this attendance. In this house, to provide employment for those poor, who are able to work, but are either averse to labour, or cannot otherwise procure it;—those, who are thrown upon the parish by the mandate of the magistrate;—those children whom it is obliged to take care of;—and those also, whom the parents, though industrious, are unable to maintain.—

tain.—By firmness and resolution, tempered with gentleness and humanity, to introduce and establish among the members of this family, a habit of labour, of cleanliness, and of decency.—To provide therein for the regular daily discharge of those religious duties, which have a tendency to correct their morals;—and most especially, to furnish the means of instruction for the children and youth; and by a *total and complete separation of these from the abandoned and depraved*, to place them out of the way of temptation, and prevent the fatal contagion of profligate discourse, and vicious examples.—To encourage *all*, by treating them with humanity and good-humour, and distributing among them suitable rewards, in proportion to their industry and good conduct: and to punish the refractory and disorderly, by withholding those rewards, by solitary confinement, or, in extreme cases, by corporal punishment.

With respect to the out-poor, or those whom it may be necessary to relieve occasionally, without taking them into this house;—to endeavour to guard against their frauds;—to acquire a knowledge of their characters and
dispo-

fitions^{*};—to extend all necessary relief and assistance to the deserving; but to withhold that assistance, where it is found, upon a careful investigation, to be unnecessary; particularly from those clamorous claimants, who seek it only as a substitute for labour, and as the means of gratifying their propensity to indolence and vice. Under one or other of these general outlines, the Bye-Laws and Regulations, established by the Directors of the SHREWSBURY HOUSE OF INDUSTRY, may all be classed and arranged.

It having been determined by the Inhabitants of this Town, to attempt the execution of such a plan, as that which has been here delineated; an application was made to Parliament for an Act to furnish them with the necessary Powers. The preamble to this Act deserves a place here. It states, “that whereas the providing a convenient House or Houses for the general reception

* It will be found, upon trial, that this important knowledge and information is much more easily procured and attained by a permanent Board of Directors, than by the Annual parochial Officers; these latter also furnishing all their aid and assistance in obtaining it.

ception of the Poor of the several parishes specified, and granting proper powers for the government, regulation, and employment of such Poor, would tend to the more effectual relief, assistance, and accommodation of such as by age, infirmities, or diseases, are rendered incapable of supporting themselves by labour; to the employment of the industrious, and those who are able to work; to the correction and punishment of the idle, refractory, and profligate; to the education of the infant poor in the habits of industry and religion; and to the advantage of themselves and the said parishes, whereby the said poor, instead of being wholly supported by the public, would contribute to the support, assistance, and relief mutually of each other, and be of some advantage to the community, to which they have hitherto been only a heavy and grievous burden; be it enacted, &c."

The Act provides,—that the Inhabitants of the parishes being rated and assessed, and possessed of an estate or annuity of thirty pounds, or being rated at fifteen pounds per Annum, be incorporated as Guardians of the Poor;—that those Guardians shall elect twelve Directors;

Directors; and that every year, four Directors shall go out, and four more be elected in their place and stead: (by which means there always remain eight persons in the Direction, who have had some experience in the duties of their office; and every Director serves for three years.)—That the parishioners shall annually elect eight Guardians, out of whom the Directors shall chuse four, to fill up the places of those who quit the Direction.—The Directors are empowered to purchase or erect the necessary buildings; to borrow for that purpose any sum of money not exceeding ten thousand pounds, and to assign the estates so purchased, together with the poor's rates, as a security for the same;—to ascertain the sum necessary to be raised by annual assessments, for paying the interest of the money so borrowed, for discharging any portion of the debt, and for maintaining the poor;—to issue their warrants to the Church-wardens and Overseers, requiring them to pay the same into the hands of their Treasurer, in such proportions and at such times as they shall judge necessary.—The proportion to be paid by each parish as their quota, is directed to be fixed and ascertained according to the

average expenditure of each parish for twelve years prior to the passing of the Act.—The Parish Officers are required to assist the Directors and carry their resolutions into execution, under a penalty for each default.—The Directors are empowered to make Bye-Laws, &c. for effecting the purposes of the Act; to take up Vagrants, and other idle and disorderly poor, and employ them in the House; where they shall be subject to such corporal, or other punishment for misconduct, as the said Directors shall judge necessary; or to hire out any of the said poor for the benefit of the House.—The power hereby vested in the Board, was requisite for enforcing that discipline, order, and regularity, which it was absolutely necessary should take place and be supported, when the poor of the different parish workhouses came all to be united in one family.—The Act also provides for a weekly Board of the Directors, in order to receive the applications of the out-poor, and transact the business of the house: and contains various other clauses which it does not seem material here to recite.

Another

Another preparatory step towards the completion of our design, was the purchase of a large and convenient building; and this being properly prepared, was opened for the reception of the Poor in the month of December, 1783.

The Advantages of this Institution soon became apparent. Notwithstanding the extra charge unavoidable at the commencement of such an undertaking, the expense of maintaining the poor of the united parishes the *first* year, was £1930 less than it had amounted to the year before,* and £1259 less than the average of the three years immediately preceding. And though the advance which has taken place in the price of all the necessaries of life since the year 1783, together with the increasing distresses of the poor, has nearly doubled the average amount of the poor's rates throughout the kingdom; yet still, in this present year, 1798, the united parishes continue to derive a most important pecuniary advantage from this Establishment. For though a Debt of £7000 was contracted by

* The disbursements of the united parishes for the maintenance of the Poor the year prior to the opening of this House were £4605 : 3 : 1½.

by the Purchase of the Buildings, the necessary alterations, furniture, &c. the Interest of which debt forms a considerable article in the yearly expenditure; the amount of the disbursements for the support of the poor, (exclusive of militia-men's families) is still upwards of nine hundred pounds per annum less than it was in the year prior to the opening of the House. And it does not admit of a doubt, that by the same vigorous exertions on the part of the Directors, which have heretofore been crowned with such ample success, the present scale of expenditure may yet be very considerably reduced.

At the commencement of the year 1797, a petition was presented to Parliament by the inhabitants of the united parishes, praying for an exemption from the operation of the poor's bill then pending. In this authentic document it is stated, "that by means of this
" establishment, the aged and infirm poor had
" been comfortably provided for, the young
" trained in habits of industry and decency;
" a stop had been put to the great frauds and
" abuses that prevailed in the parochial expenditure, and those poor who had laboured
" under temporary distress or disability, had
" been

“ been more liberally assisted and relieved in
“ their own dwellings, than had before been
“ found practicable. That, while the poor
“ themselves had derived these important be-
“ nefits from this institution, the petitioners
“ had also been very considerably relieved
“ from the heavy and growing burden of the
“ parochial taxes. That the poor's rates for
“ the united parishes had, ever since the com-
“ mencement of this undertaking, been
“ greatly reduced; and that the amount of
“ that reduction in the term of twelve years
“ subsequent to this establishment, was nine-
“ teen thousand three hundred and fifteen
“ pounds, thirteen shillings, and six pence.
“ That this very considerable reduction had
“ taken place, notwithstanding the farther
“ charge of more than two thousand pounds
“ upon the said rates, for the erection of
“ bridges thrown down by violent inunda-
“ tions, the maintenance of the families of
“ men serving in the militia, and the paro-
“ chial levies for the army and navy. That
“ the petitioners were well convinced these
“ combined and inestimable advantages had
“ arisen from the good management of the
“ Board of Directors, appointed under the
“ special

“ special act granted for this establishment ;
“ that the qualifications required had render-
“ ed that Board respectable ; the number of
“ Directors secured the advantage of com-
“ bined judgment and due deliberation ; ef-
“ fectually prevented the abuse and oppression
“ of the poor ; and, from the particular form
“ of their constitution, enabled them to act
“ with the advantage of practical knowledge
“ and experience in the duties of their office.
“ The petitioners therefore prayed for a total
“ exemption from the operation of the pend-
“ ing bill.” To trace the causes of this suc-
cess, and point out those regulations which
have most materially contributed to it, is the
particular design of this publication.

The Directors, it has been observed, were
empowered to enact Bye-Laws and Regula-
tions for the Management of the Poor, and
the Government of the House. They pro-
ceeded in this important work with much
caution, and waited some years to prove the
effect of these regulations, before they pro-
ceeded to collect them together, and to give
them their final sanction. They were then
digested and published, under the inspection
of

of a Committee appointed for that purpose; and with the consent of the Directors are annexed to this Account.

In order to guard as much as possible against the frauds and impositions which greatly enhanced the poor's rates, those regulations were adopted which are contained in the first part of the Bye-Laws. The acting parish Officers were required to attend the weekly boards; to communicate all the applications for relief, and all the information they could procure respecting the state and circumstances of the parties so applying; and they were restricted from relieving, without the orders of the Board, or, in cases of emergency, of three Directors. When sickness was the plea, the apothecary of the House was immediately applied to, to visit them; and, according to his report, such relief was ordered as the case really required. This put a stop to a very fruitful source of imposition; for this sickness was very often found to be a mere pretence for extorting money from the parish: and they had contrived such artful modes of deceit, that nothing short of personal examination, aided by the judgment of
D a skilful

a skilful practitioner, was found sufficient to detect and expose. The payment of rents, was a great and growing evil. This was, from the first opening of the House, entirely disallowed. Where families were so poor that they could not pay rent, the house was open for their reception: and those that could work were there employed, or hired out, and by their labour contributed towards the support of the rest. It was at first strongly objected to this, that such a resolution would tend to increase instead of diminish the expense of supporting the poor; and that it was better to pay a small annual rent, than bring a whole family upon the parish. But the event, as was foreseen, proved directly the reverse. It was found, that there was not one family in fifty who could support themselves while their rent was paid, but could also support themselves without that assistance: and of those who were taken in, the most part disliking that constant application and temperance, which they were here obliged to submit to, very soon petitioned for their discharge, and have supported themselves as well, if not better, since this aid was withdrawn. Whilst their rents were paid, and they were support-
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ed in time of sickness, they had no inducement to oeconomy; but being now obliged to make some reserve for their landlord, they have found it practicable also to make a further reserve for themselves; and to provide those conveniences, which they feel the comfort of possessing. The greatest act of kindness that can be done to the general body of the poor, is to remove the props by which their idleness is encouraged and supported; and compel all who are able, to maintain themselves. Idleness is the parent of vice and misery; Industry, in persons of this class particularly, the guide to virtue and happiness.

Another of these pernicious leaning stocks was removed, and a very considerable saving produced, by the *general* disallowance of regular constant Weekly Pay. I mean to distinguish between *constant* weekly pay, and that which it may be found necessary *occasionally* to allow in times of sickness, or temporary distress. Great numbers, through the interest of their friends, the mistaken kindness of overseers, or their being *at the time* in real want of such allowance, were put upon the weekly pay list; and when once their names

were entered there, the allowance was continued long after the necessity—where there was any—had ceased to exist. Yet still, with respect to those aged Poor, who are arrived at the decline of a life spent in honest Industry, and have children or friends disposed to take proper care of them; we often allow that stated relief which enables them to pass the evening of their days in *those* dwellings, and *that* society, which long habit and tender connections have endeared to them. These are cases, however, that do not very frequently occur in our cities and populous towns; for the poor, struggling with misfortune, worn *down* by incessant labour, or worn *out* by intemperance and debauchery, seldom live out more than half their days.

The disallowance of Clothing to the out-poor by the 14th Bye-Law, may at first sight appear a harsh measure; but when it is observed that, by the Bye-Law immediately preceding, it was directed, that where families are too large to be maintained by the labour of the parents, a part of their children shall be taken into the House; this objection will be done away. The clothing of poor families *generally*, was another pernicious encouragement

couragement to idleness, opened a door to great partiality and abuse, and was a source of enormous expense. This mode of relieving poor families, by taking some of the children into the house, instead of allowing them clothing or constant weekly pay, is likewise attended with another great advantage. The children thus taken from vicious and profligate parents—and, alas! too many of the parochial poor come under this description—are here trained up to Habits of Industry; are instructed in the knowledge of their duty; are preserved from the contagion of evil examples; and thus all is done, that is in human power, to lay a foundation for good morals and honest industry in the succeeding generation, and to render this important class of the community useful, instead of burdensome, to their country. Still further to remove every possible objection, the parents are allowed occasionally to visit them, or to exchange them for others. They see them here well fed, clothed and taught; and thus enjoying many advantages, which their poverty, indolence or neglect, had hitherto debarred them of. And when these children are put out

out apprentices, their parents, if living, are always informed of it, and their consent obtained; the separation, therefore, is in fact but little more than that which takes place when children of a superior rank are boarded at a school.

These benefits will appear in a more striking point of view, when contrasted with the situation in which the children of the poor are *generally* placed, in our cities and populous towns. Their habitations are the sinks of filth, profligacy, and vice, and their morals are early contaminated by evil communications and bad examples. On the other hand, where the parents, on account of their numerous progeny, are allowed weekly pay, the money is too commonly squandered away in intemperance, and the poor children are left destitute of that sustenance necessary for their support.*

In addition to what has been here stated, with respect to the management of the out-poor,

* For an answer to those objections which have been advanced on these grounds against Houses of Industry, see Introductory Observations.

poor, it seems only necessary to add, that due attention is paid to the method of keeping the parochial accounts. A set of books, ruled with proper columns, were delivered to the officers of each parish; in which they keep these accounts regularly classed; one book for temporary weekly pay, another for nurses' pay,* and another for occasional relief. These books are examined and audited by the board once a fortnight; when they receive an order upon the treasurer of the house for the amount of their disbursements; and once a month they are called upon to pay into the treasurer's hands the monthly quota of each parish for the maintenance of the poor, agreeable to the proportion settled by the act.

We come now to conduct the benevolent enquirer within the doors of this spacious mansion; and lay before him an account of its internal management and regulations.

And here, the first object that engaged the

* The account of nurses' pay is now kept by the secretary of the house, and laid before the weekly boards.

the attention of the Directors, was the providing employment for the Poor. This was the *Opus operandum*: but patience and perseverance, under the direction of sound judgment, was attended with its usual good success. As there was no other manufactory in the town in which the poor could be employed; as to provide clothing for the considerable numbers that were here collected together, would of itself furnish work enough for no small proportion of them; and as the first processes of the woollen manufactory were simple, and the knowledge of them easily acquired; this appeared upon the whole the most favourable to the circumstances and situation of the family here assembled. The necessary machines and implements, with a supply of the raw material, were therefore procured; and persons versed in scribbling, carding, and spinning wool were hired to instruct the paupers. Weavers were likewise engaged; a shop with looms fitted up for their use; and a detached wing of the building divided into little habitations, and allotted for their accommodation.* At the same

* This branch is now principally carried on by the young paupers.

same time, working rooms or shops were set apart for the shoemakers, taylor, carpenters, &c. where those paupers who had been brought up to these occupations, were immediately employed; the most intelligent and trusty being appointed to cut out the work, and superintend the rest. The largest apartments were allotted for the carding and spinning rooms, where the greatest number of the poor are collected together.

Being thus set to work, much pains were taken, and much ingenuity exercised, by the gentlemen then in the direction, (who are entitled to the warmest applause and gratitude from their fellow citizens,*) in devising means to excite and enforce among them, proper attention to, and diligence in their respective occupations. The idle and refractory were punished in various ways; for smaller offences, by clothing them in sackcloth, fastening a clog to them, or depriving them of that gratuity I shall presently give an account of: for more flagrant misconduct, by solitary confinement in a cell,

* In paying this just tribute to their exertions, I am not liable to the imputation of vanity, as I was not a Director till some years afterwards.

a cell, where they were fed only with bread and water; and sometimes, when they were mutinous, and endeavoured to excite in others a spirit of sedition, by corporal punishment. It has very seldom been found necessary to have recourse to this *dernier ressource*; but when it has, it is inflicted in the presence of the whole family, and has never failed to produce a striking and very useful effect. And here I would observe, that unless the Directors of such establishments are furnished with sufficient power to enforce a reasonable obedience, it will be absolutely impossible that any such attempt should meet with success. This family may be compared to a little kingdom, whose subjects, not yet civilised, are actuated by strong passions and selfish views; and are not a little disposed to treachery and rebellion. A power adequate to the purpose of restraining these dispositions, must necessarily be lodged in the hands of the Directors; or the requisite subordination and good order can never be supported and maintained. The dangers incident to an arbitrary government are not, in this little community, to be dreaded; since the *Governors* can have no personal interest in opposition to the good

good of the *governed**: nor can it be more dangerous to entrust such authority in a Board of twelve respectable Directors, returned by the parishes at large, than to vest a still higher degree of power in the hands of any individual magistrate.

A much more pleasing employment, (to return to my subject) was to hold forth to the poor such encouragements and rewards, as might excite and stimulate them to active exertions. And here, the Directors adopted a bold measure, which has been crowned with the happiest success. They agreed to allow to the poor employed in the house, a sixth part of their earnings as a gratuity; that is, for every shilling they gained in the course of the week, two-pence was given them at the end of it. This rendered their situation very comfortable. Well fed, clothed, and lodged, they stood in want of no necessaries; and the little pocket money so procured, was not sufficient, however laid out, to produce any very bad effect. At the same time, being at their own disposal, and enabling them to fur-

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nish

* It is provided by the Act, that no Director shall be concerned in any contract.

nish themselves with those little superfluities, which custom endears, and almost converts into necessities; they felt themselves gratified and happy: and there has not been wanting instances, where some of this despised class of mankind, in the disposal of these little fruits of their personal labour, manifested affections and dispositions, which would have done honour to any rank or order in the community. The following little anecdote perhaps will not be unacceptable. A boy of ten years old, by the death of his father, was thrown upon the parish, and taken into this House: his poor mother was at the same time a patient in the County Infirmary. Not long after he had been set to work, he requested leave at the close of the week to visit his surviving parent; and this being readily obtained, he took her fourpence, the little amount of his week's gratuity.

All the working children have their gratuities in the same proportion with the rest of the paupers, that is, a sixth part of their earnings: but the steward humanely takes care of it for them, and keeps an open account with each of them, subject to the inspection of

of the Directors; he allows them what he thinks prudent for them to expend, and the rest lies by and accumulates. When it amounts to a sufficient sum, the girls generally petition for leave to lay it out in the purchase of a plain, decent Sunday dress, of a superior quality to the uniform of the House. And on that day a large number of them are seen going to public worship in neat camblet gowns, straw hats, &c, the produce of their own industry. The Directors have for their encouragement given them green ribband hatbands, with this Inscription,

THE REWARD OF DILIGENCE.

The savings of the boys are generally reserved till they are put out apprentice, when they are laid out in what may be useful to them.

By these methods, a general spirit of Diligence and Industry has been excited; and by a *continuance* of these exertions—A CONSTANT, UNREMITTING ATTENTION TO WHICH WILL EVER REMAIN NECESSARY—it may be supported and preserved.

But

But the boys and girls are not all employed in the Woollen Manufactory. Some of the former are put under the Shoemakers and Taylors; and a shop has been fitted up, where about twelve of them are instructed by a Nailor, who will have a succession. An agreement has been made with these people, that they shall, for a certain time, take all the profits of the children's labour: the term being longer or shorter, in proportion to the nature and difficulty of the work, and the time usually requisite to acquire a proficiency therein. These agreements render it the interest of the instructors to take pains to bring them forward, and to keep them diligently to their work. There is also this further advantage in it, that those children here acquire the knowledge of a trade, by which they may support themselves, who, in consequence of scrophula, or natural infirmities, which they unfortunately inherit from their distempered parents, could not be put out apprentice; and must of course have remained burthens to the community during the whole of their lives. This part of the plan it is meant to extend to other occupations, as opportunities offer.

But

But, pleasing as this statement may appear, there is another circumstance, that must afford to every good citizen, and every humane mind, a much higher and nobler satisfaction. I allude to the pains which have been taken to sow the seeds of virtue and happiness in the younger branches of this little community. Children thrown upon the parish from their birth, are put out to nurse; where they remain until they are two years old, and several until they are four: the nurses being occasionally required to bring them to the House on Board days, that the Directors may satisfy themselves they are properly taken care of; and likewise that the children may be identified, and those frauds guarded against, which have been not unfrequently practised. When these children are taken into the House, they are put under the care of the House nurses; the boys in one nursery, the girls in another. As soon as they are capable, they attend every morning and afternoon in the school room, where proper instructors are provided. Here they are taught to spell and read, and likewise learn their catechism; which they occasionally repeat on Sundays to the chaplain of the House, before the whole family assembled for divine worship.

Soon

Soon after they are five years old, they are taken into the factory or spinning room, and begin to spin yarn at the long wheel, under the tuition of a spinning mistress; and then, they attend an evening school after the working hours are over. The children of the out poor, are generally old enough to be put to work at the time of their admission. All are allowed half an hour at breakfast, and an hour at dinner; and, as soon as these meals are over, amuse themselves in a large exercise-ground adjoining the House, and enclosed by a sunk fence: they are also allowed several holidays in the course of the year. By habit, their daily employment soon ceases to become irksome. They see their little companions around them, all engaged like themselves; and, by their cheerful countenances and general vivacity, it is apparent that they are contented and happy. Their frequent amusement is to sing short moral songs, which they have learnt by rote; a singing master being allowed a small annual stipend to instruct them in psalmody.

The scene I have been describing never fails to interest the intelligent spectator. I
have

have seen the tear of benevolent sensibility trembling in the eye of a HOWARD*, and several other exalted characters, as I have accompanied them through the working rooms; where they have frequently stopped to indulge their generous emotions.—The mind, on such occasions, naturally presents to itself the reverse of the picture. The children thus cheerful and happy, thus innocently and usefully employed—if this establishment had not taken place, would have been strolling and begging in our streets, covered with filth and rags, abandoned to ignorance and vice, the wretched outcasts and pests of Society.

Who can dwell for a moment on this subject, without discerning the great utility, and
 F feeling

* The House had the honour of a visit from this justly celebrated Man, in his last excursion through this part of the Kingdom. Not only the apartments, but the paupers themselves, particularly the children, underwent a very critical inspection. He obliged many of the latter to take off their shoes and stockings, and shew him the soles of their feet. At the time, he expressed much pleasure and satisfaction; and he afterwards made a very handsome report of it, in one of his last publications.

feeling the vast importance, of this part of our plan? As it most justly claims, so it will, I hope and trust, ever obtain the principal, most serious, and unremitting attention of the Directors.—What a foundation may here be laid for the prosperity and happiness of thousands of our fellow creatures and fellow citizens?—not only the individuals who may in succession be trained up in this House, but all their future families and connections. And it is an object which sound policy, as well as humanity, strongly recommends. These individuals, these families, will no longer be the burden and reproach of our parishes and our country. Accustomed to labour, and trained up to virtue, they will find it both their interest and their happiness to *continue* virtuous and laborious. They will feel themselves raised thereby to a more respectable rank in society; they will enjoy, by comparison, the superior blessings of their situation: the *habits* being formed, the main difficulty will be surmounted, and they will add to the stock of national wealth, prosperity, and happiness.

This

This is not a chimerical rhapsody, or, 'the baseless fabric of a vision.' It has been well observed, that the effect of *moral* powers, is not less certain than that of *physical*: the *passions* are susceptible of culture, equally with the *understanding*: and men may be made industrious, well disposed, and mutually useful to each other, instead of lazy, mischievous, and injurious. I would add, in confirmation of this reasoning, the celebrated aphorism of the wise man, 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he *will not* depart from it.' I would add also, that whilst due pains are thus taken to lay a good foundation, we place ourselves in the way of obtaining all that is further requisite to ensure the most complete success; namely, the assistance and blessing of the great Author of the human frame, who hath thus constituted its mental and corporeal powers—I shall, I trust, therefore stand excused, if I again recommend this as an object, that demands and deserves the prime consideration of those, to whom the conduct of such establishments is, or may be committed. Let them direct their constant attention to the great field of intellect which is here afforded for cultivation, nor ever lose

fight of the inestimable advantages that may be derived from this culture, if the opportunity be well improved. At the same time let it never be forgotten, that no other means can ever produce this most desirable reform, but the separation of the young who are innocent, from the vicious of riper age, who would contaminate them.—Pregnant single women, and abandoned prostitutes, are frequently removed to their parishes, and must there be taken in and provided for. These ought by all means to be kept totally apart from the young people, particularly the girls. If employed in the same apartments, lodged in the same dormitories, or more especially still, if suffered to associate with them during the hours allotted for exercise, on Sundays or on holidays, when they are not under the eye or inspection of their governor or instructors; they will most inevitably corrupt their minds, and destroy those good impressions, which it has been the labour of years to instill,

I am not writing a panegyrick on the SHREWSBURY INSTITUTION. Like every other institution of human origin, it has not yet attained the summit of perfection: and as
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this publication is intended for the information of others, it would be unpardonable not to point out those defects which we have not yet surmounted. Among these, the want of this *complete* separation, is, I believe, by far the most important. When the girls brought up in this House, have arrived at that age in which their passions require the strictest guard, and the strongest controul; several instances have occurred of their being inveigled by women of that description I have mentioned, and persuaded to escape with them, and commence the same miserable career; and this with a view to make a pecuniary advantage to themselves, by the sacrifice of these hapless victims. The measure proposed would necessarily be attended with some trouble, and some expense; it is not therefore surprising that it has not yet been *wholly* effected; and we ought rather to congratulate ourselves that so much has been done, than wonder that any thing should be left to do. Several advances have likewise been made towards it: these women are now kept in separate working rooms and dormitories. It only remains to render the separation *complete*, by removing them to a detached building, where they could not associate

ciate with the girls during the hours of exercise, or at those times when they are out of employ. I cannot entertain a doubt, but that this also will shortly be accomplished; since I am convinced the importance of it is felt by the present, and will be by future Directors.

It must not be forgot, that this institution has two distinct objects in view; the one, to prevent a waste of public money; the other, to introduce the effects of a good education among the poor. The former is important on æconomical principles; the latter, on principles that warmly interest the best affections of the human heart; and happy must that man be, who has reason to flatter himself that, by his exertions, he has contributed to preserve one of these parochial wards from the miseries of female prostitution. May I be permitted to advance a step further, and add, that on the other hand, it will become every one seriously to consider, how far he may make himself accountable for all the miseries and all the crimes of those unhappy girls, who are thus seduced, by throwing any obstacles in the way of this most essential reform?—It is a weighty, solemn thought, and cannot fail

fail of making the deepest impression upon every humane and considerate mind.

Much pity is undoubtedly due to many of that unhappy class of females I have spoken of: and it is that very principle that impels me to plead so earnestly for the separation proposed. O! let it be remembered, that the poor girls, who from these parochial seminaries launch into the world, by losing their *reputation*, lose their *bread*. They have no friends to throw the veil of human kindness over human frailty, and when once fallen, too generally sink into irretrievable wretchedness and ruin.* Far, very far, is it from my design or intention to give the smallest offence; and — but I check myself; it were an insult to any individual to suppose him capable of expecting an apology for my earnest freedom on such a subject.

To

* If any of the women thus separated (particularly the pregnant women) behave well, and manifest satisfactory proofs of reformation, it may be right then to admit them into the family; still however keeping a watchful eye upon their conduct. This will be making a proper distinction between them and those who appear wholly depraved; and operate as an encouragement to their amendment.

To proceed. When the children attain a proper age, they will either be taught some trade in the house, or be put out apprentice. The girls are employed by rotation in the kitchen and laundry, or in cleansing the house; but it still remains a *desideratum*, to procure for them such various kinds of needle-work, &c. as would more completely qualify them for usefulness in private families.

In the house, the poor are called up by ring of bell: in the summer months at half past five; during the four winter months, they have prayers and breakfast over before break of day; and there are stated hours for making the beds, cleaning the dormitories, washing and combing the children, &c. by which means, a constant attention to cleanliness is kept up, and that to a degree, which excites the admiration of those strangers who are conducted over it. The family breakfast, dine and sup together in the dining hall, classed separately at different tables; the men, the women, the boys, and the girls. Before breakfast, morning prayers are read; before supper, evening prayers, daily. A salary is allowed to a chaplain

SHREWSBURY HOUSE OF INDUSTRY. 41

lain, who reads prayers and preaches to the family every Sunday afternoon, in a chapel set apart for that purpose, that runs parallel to the dining hall, and is of the same dimensions, viz. 120 feet by 20 feet: here also they are seated in separate classes,

At a bow-shot distance from the house, are two ranges of building, that run parallel to each other: the one contains apartments where the poor are sent upon their admission, to be stripped and washed; and if found to have any cutaneous or other infectious disorder, they remain there till they are cured; there are separate wards for the women and the men. Adjoining to this, is an apartment to which the dead are immediately conveyed, to remain till their interment.* In the same range is another apartment, called the Fever Room. In the opposite range is the house infirmary, with separate wards for the men and women; where the sick and infirm are lodged under the care of nurses, and attended by the apothecary of the house. In

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* The Act of Parliament provided for the setting apart a burial ground, which has been done; and the poor who die in the house are buried there.

cases of difficulty, a physician is consulted. In surgery cases, the patients are generally sent to the county Infirmary, the Directors subscribing annually to that hospital. When it is thought requisite, the sick poor are dieted according to the directions of the faculty.

For the family at large, a general bill of fare being appointed, the provision for each day is prepared without any perplexity or confusion. Every contrivance is adopted to shorten labour. Corn is purchased in the weekly market, and afterwards ground and dressed in a windmill belonging to the house; where the inhabitants of the town may also have their corn ground and dressed for sixpence a bushel, without any risk of diminution or adulteration. Women selected from among the paupers, are employed in the house to bake and brew. The beer is brewed in the following manner. To five bushels of malt is added forty pounds of treacle and seven pounds of hops. This makes three hogsheads of beer, of eighty-two gallons each. Eight pounds of treacle is found to add as much strength to the beer as

one

one bushel of malt; it makes it also much brisker and pleasanter. At the present high price of malt, this beer costs about twopence-halfpenny per gallon. It has also been found of essential advantage, both in point of economy and convenience, to keep a sufficient number of cows to furnish the house with cheese and milk. One day in the week the poor dine on hot cakes and milk; another, their beverage is whey. This is wholesome, and with due attention will produce a great saving in the article of malt. The dairy also furnishes a considerable quantity of pig-wash, which, when added to the other offal, necessarily produced in such a family, serves to fatten a large number of young swine, or what we call porkits. These are bought in small, and after feeding them for two or three months, are sold out again at a considerable advance, and the net profit in the course of the year has been found an important object. As the cheese is made of a mixture of new with skimmed milk, a considerable quantity of butter is also produced, the whole of which, except what is wanting for the sick, &c. is sold, and brings in upon an average twenty shillings per week. The present number of

cows is fifteen. This dairy also furnishes employment for some of the poor, and the young girls appointed to assist therein may become duly qualified for farmers' servants. At first, there was an annual contract with an apothecary; and proposals being sent in, those who offered to contract on the lowest terms were accepted: but this was objected to, as holding out a strong temptation to the contractor not to pay the necessary attention to the sick poor, nor supply them with the best drugs. And the contracts for the first two or three years enabling the Directors to ascertain what was a reasonable sum, they determined to fix a regular stipend; and, in order to give the experiment a fair trial, agreed with an apothecary for three years. The benefits resulting from this alteration are so apparent and considerable, that it is probable they will engage for a much longer term. One of these advantages is, that the apothecary becomes acquainted with the persons and families of the out poor, (for the contract extends to them;) has a better knowledge of their constitutions and hereditary ailments; and is also enabled more frequently and effectually to detect the numerous impositions, which,
under

under pretence of sickness, they are daily attempting. This last circumstance has been found of the most essential consequence.

I have seen it stated as an objection to Houses of Industry, that they are pernicious to the health of the poor, and occasion a greater mortality. This will appear a strange paradox to the inhabitants of Shrewsbury, where this establishment has most assuredly produced the contrary effect.

The Objector probably did not consider, that the worn out profligate, and all the dis-tempered and aged poor incapable of labour, resort to these parochial receptacles in the last stages of their earthly career; and thus unavoidably produce a considerable *local* mortality. But that such Houses affect and shorten the lives of the poor in general, or increase the number of deaths among them, is a position, I am firmly convinced, so far from being well founded, that, on the contrary, they greatly contribute to promote the health and prolong the lives of those who reside in them, or, when ill, are conveyed
to

to them. Here, a constant attention is paid to that cleanliness, so salutary in its effects. The sick are under the care of nurses, provided with every thing proper for them, and lodged in spacious apartments, well ventilated.—In their own houses, they are generally crowded together in small dirty rooms, where the confined air is strongly impregnated with putrid effluvia; and where one bed is the common receptacle for the parents and the children, the sick and the well. When ill, they are perverse and obstinate in their management, and have generally recourse—whatever be the malady—to distilled spirits, to drive, as they express it, the disease from the heart. They can seldom be prevailed upon to take the medicines, or comply with the directions given them. If their disorders are dangerous and infectious, they are shunned and abandoned by all their neighbours. It is always extremely difficult, and often impossible, to procure nurses to attend them; and if they *are* obtained, the consequence too generally is, that in these crowded, filthy habitations, they imbibe the contagion, and convey it to their own families; thus multiplying

plying the evil, and spreading, with increasing rapidity, the ravages of the disease.

If these data are well founded, and I presume they will hardly be disputed, the conclusion is undeniable—That the poor resident in these houses, and the sick poor, occasionally taken care of in their adjacent infirmaries; stand a much better chance for the preservation of their health; or for their recovery, when attacked with those maladies, which are found to be peculiarly fatal to this class of mankind. This leads me to mention a proposal, which has been laid before the Directors: It is, for extending this provision for the relief of those poor who are attacked with putrid fevers, or other infectious diseases, by purchasing or erecting a building, at a sufficient distance from the House to prevent all danger, to be particularly appropriated for the purposes of a Lazaretto: but, as names make a great impression, to be called, **THE HOUSE OF RECOVERY.** To provide in this building a ward for the men, another for the women, with water closets; a third and fourth for the convalescents, and an apartment for the nurses, where they

they may prepare the broth, or other provisions ordered for the patients. As the mode recommended for ventilating the wards may possibly be of *general* use, I shall here take the liberty to describe it. It is, to place in the outer walls, at regular distances, a range of perforated cylinders, about six inches in diameter; and in order to prevent the inconvenience or danger that may be produced by admitting too strong a current of air at one aperture, to place all round the inside of the rooms, to cover these cylinders, a boarded casing perforated with augre holes. This will introduce a constant, regular supply of fresh air; the foul air, produced by the patients, may be carried off by means of funnels or tubes placed on each side the chimney, and in each angle of the apartment, and passing through the roof, with raised caps or bonnets at the top, to prevent the rain from descending down them. The expense of this apparatus is trifling; and it has the advantage of producing a regular circulation of air without danger or inconvenience, and independent of the pleasure or inclination of the persons who occupy the apartments; who are apt, if they find themselves in the least incommoded

commoded by it, obstinately to keep shut every opening by which the cold air is admitted.*

It is conceived that such a provision as that I have now stated, would answer many very important and valuable purposes. It would produce a great saving to large or united parishes; for it is well known that when such cases occur, the expense attending the relief and support of the poor, in their own houses, is at present enormous. The lives of many industrious parents would also be preserved, on whose labour their families depend for support; and a much greater number be saved from the danger of infection. In this view, it is indeed an object of the highest importance to the whole community. Those fatal diseases which respect not the rich more than the poor, will by this means be checked in their first approaches; and their *general prevalence*, were such asylums opened near every considerable town, would become as uncom-

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* This mode of ventilation was recommended to the author by Sir JEROME FITZPATRICK, who has rendered his country such essential service by his improvements of this kind in Hospital and Transport-vessels.

mon as that of the plague itself; which has been shut out of this country, and almost all Europe, for a century, by means of similar precautions.

Since the publication of the first edition of this Account, the plan here recommended has been carried into full effect in the Town of Manchester. A HOUSE OF RECOVERY has been established there under the direction of a Committee, denominated THE BOARD OF HEALTH. The object and happy consequences of this admirable institution are so intimately connected with my subject, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of introducing in this place the following particulars, taken from their printed reports.

“ To meliorate the condition of the poor;
“ to prevent the generation of diseases; to
“ obviate the propagation of them by con-
“ tagion; and to mitigate those which exist,
“ are the professed objects of this institution.
“ A HOUSE OF RECOVERY has been establish-
“ ed, for the purpose of removing thereto those
“ fever patients, who, from extreme penury,
“ are incapable of receiving proper aids in
“ their

“ their own close and noisome dwellings, or
 “ who are liable to communicate contagion to
 “ a numerous family; and, if in a crowded
 “ neighbourhood, even to perpetuate its viru-
 “ lence.—The Trustees have now the satis-
 “ faction of announcing to the public the ac-
 “ complishment of an undertaking, at once
 “ consonant to sound policy, and to the prin-
 “ ciples of christian philanthropy.”

The number of patients admitted into this House from May 1796, to May 1797, was 371. Of these, 324 were discharged cured; 40 died, and 7 remained in the House when this report was published.

The blessed effects of this institution, in checking the progress of contagion, and almost exterminating an epidemic disease, appear from the following particulars stated in the same reports.—In January 1796, prior to the opening of this HOUSE OF RECOVERY, the number of home* *fever* patients on the books of the Manchester Infirmary, was 226. In January 1797, only 57. For a period of

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* Patients attended at their own dwellings by the Infirmary Physicians.

eight months, from September 1793, to May 1794, the number of fever patients in the district, comprising several streets in the neighbourhood of the HOUSE OF RECOVERY, was 400. For the same period the next year, 389. For the same period the year following, 267.

For eight months, from July 1796, to March 1797, (subsequent to the opening of this House,) 25.—This period in each year was selected on account of the usual prevalence of fever therein.

The following resolution by the Manchester Overseers of the Poor, will be deemed a sufficient apology for my inserting the above account in this publication.

“ O^r. 28th, 1796.

“ It being the *unanimous* opinion of the
 “ District Overseers, that the *Fever Wards*,
 “ (the House of Recovery) are of universal
 “ benefit to this town; it was agreed, that
 “ Fifteen Guineas should be paid annually,
 “ as a *Town's Subscription*, to that excellent
 “ Charity.”—The town is all in one parish.

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* The following is one of the cases admitted into this House of Recovery, as reported by Doctor Bardley.

Mary

The admirable internal regulations for this institution ought to be printed and stuck up in

Mary Parkinson, aged twenty, the second daughter of Ann Parkinson, lodging with her mother and sister at James Rushton's, (who rents a garret, No. 50, Great Turner-street,) was seized on the 17th inst. with a spotted fever, and visited in a day or two after, as a home-patient of the Infirmary. She was found, almost destitute of covering, lying upon a collection of rags spread upon the floor of a close, dirty, and noisome garret. In this wretched substitute for a bed, the mother and another grown-up daughter (just recovering of fever) likewise slept. In an opposite corner of the room, James Rushton, his wife, and three children slept upon a bed, similar to that above described. Under such circumstances, I was fully convinced, that it would be impracticable to prevent the fever from spreading, unless the infected person could be removed. But, as the House of Recovery was not then opened, the removal of the patient could not be effected. In a day or two, as I expected, the daughter of James Rushton sickened, and became dangerously ill of the fever. As the wife, (who was far advanced in her pregnancy) and the rest of the inhabitants of the room, might be supposed to be in hourly danger of infection, I proposed, therefore, (the House of Recovery being now ready) as the most likely method of saving the lives of the two women so dangerously affected, and of preventing the rest from receiving the infection, that the sick persons should be instantly removed into the House of Recovery. With every expression of joy and gratitude, the parents of both the patients accepted the offer, and they were accordingly removed, without suffering any injury, or apparent inconvenience, by the removal.

in every parish vestry in the kingdom. A copy of them transmitted to me by Dr. Percival, of Manchester, is inserted in the Appendix.

In addition to the above, I have also been favoured by Dr. Percival with the following striking facts in proof of the great utility of this institution, and its salutary operation on the general health of the town of Manchester.

From May 1794, to May 1795, the number of coffins paid for by the Overseers of the Poor, was	-	-	-	538
From May 1795, to May 1796	-	-	-	540

Since opening the House of Recovery.

From May 1796, to May 1797	-	-	-	387
From May 1797, to May 1798	-	-	-	364

Home patients entered on the books of the Infirmary.

From June 1795, to June 1796	-	-	3836
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Since opening the House of Recovery.

From June 1796, to June 1797	-	-	1759
From June 1797, to June 1798	-	-	1464

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I conceive that a very material advantage in point of expense, would arise from attaching such a provision for fever patients to Houses of Industry. The patients might be attended by the house nurses; the ingredients for the diet prescribed, might be furnished by the house; and, when no epidemic prevailed, no charge would be incurred.

I have already observed, that steady, persevering attention on the part of the Directors, will always be requisite to ensure the continuance of those advantages which have been derived from this establishment; the 24th and 25th Bye-Laws, which provide for the appointment of Committees, have had a very salutary effect in promoting this attention. The board of twelve Directors are divided into three Committees. One for accounts, another for the manufactory, and a third to superintend the distribution of clothing to the poor in the house. At the weekly boards, the general business of the parishes and of the house, takes up the whole of the time that can conveniently be spared. These Committees meet on other days, to transact the business of their several departments. The clothing

ing Committee attend regularly once a fortnight, when a list is prepared for them, by the Steward, of such poor in the house as are in want of clothing. These they inspect personally, and order such clothing as they think requisite; and the preceding distribution being entered in two books, kept for the purpose,* these accounts are then checked and signed by them. These books are so made out, as to exhibit, at one view, the clothing distributed to each individual in the course of the year, classed under the separate articles, as Coats, Gowns, Shoes, &c. and being cast up once a year, the value of the whole is thereby ascertained. By referring to this account, abuses are easily discovered, and no paupers can embezzle their clothing without detection.

The manufacturing committee, in like manner, attend to the general conduct of that concern, and statedly examine the books relating to it. In these books likewise a particular account is kept of the prime cost of the raw material, the charge for carding, spinning

* One for the men and boys, the other for the women and girls.

spinning, weaving, dyeing, and dressing, each piece of goods, and the sum it is sold for, by which means the profit or loss is clearly ascertained. The committee of accounts occasionally examine the books in which the general accounts of the house are kept; and once a year the whole of that year's accounts are inspected and passed by them, and a general statement made out and signed. It should here be observed, however, that the weekly receipts and disbursements are always examined at the Board, and signed by three of the Directors then present.

All the Directors, agreeable to the 33d and 34th Bye-Laws, alternately act as house-visitors; and satisfy themselves, by personal observation and inspection, that the rules and ordinances are duly executed and enforced.

All this duty may appear in the detail to be formidable; but in reality a very little time, *if regularly allotted for the purpose*, is sufficient for the discharge of the whole. From two to three hours once a week is all that is requisite to enable the manufacturing and clothing committees to go through

the business of their respective departments. Less time still is sufficient for the committed of accounts. And there is this great advantage in the arrangement, that the accounts and whole business of the house are, or may be, kept in a regular train; the whole goes forward almost mechanically; and a small power, thus *steadily applied*, is sufficient to keep the whole of this great and complicated machine in constant, equal motion. Perhaps, as the number of Directors when divided into committees is very small, it might be an improvement, instead of separate committees, to appoint two weekly board days for the whole body; on the one, to attend solely to the concerns of the out-poor; on the other, to those of the house.

Thus have I endeavoured, as well as my limited abilities would permit, to execute the task required of me, and to furnish the publick with *some account* of this establishment. All that remains, is to offer some HINTS to those who have similar institutions in view.

To this part of my subject I proceed with much diffidence and timidity; and must
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my candid readers to regard the little I have to offer, as proceeding, not from dictatorial vanity, but from an humble desire to suggest such observations as appear to me, upon a careful investigation, to be of some importance and utility. Experience is the *school* of wisdom; as adversity is of virtue; and the *child* of simplicity may there glean some useful maxims, not altogether unworthy attention from the *man* of superior understanding.

Whether the general establishment of district Houses of Industry throughout the kingdom at large be a practicable measure, I presume not to determine. But certain it is, that those which are placed in large or populous towns have peculiar advantages.—It is not so difficult to meet with a sufficient number of proper persons to undertake the direction and management of them; nor is the necessary attendance so troublesome and inconvenient as in the country, where the directors may have several miles to travel. In great towns likewise, the frauds and abuses I have mentioned more generally prevail; and a reform of those abuses of course produces a more sensible effect, and a more con-

considerable reduction of expense.* In such situations, our own experience entitles me to affirm, there can be little doubt, with any tolerable management, of producing a very considerable saving in the annual expenditure; in addition to the other still more important advantages, and beneficial consequences, on which I have enlarged.

The first step generally taken towards the adoption of such a plan, is to obtain the consent of the inhabitants or parishioners, and to convene a General Meeting for that purpose. The next advance, is the appointment of a Committee to conduct the business. And here I would beg leave to recommend a precaution, which will be found of very material consequence. Let the Committee be well selected, but not too numerous. Six or eight intelligent independent persons, will be more likely to act with unanimity and concord, than a greater number. They will

* The result of the experiment in several *Country Districts*, has not been so favourable as could be wished; and this seems to have been owing partly to the circumstances above stated, and partly to the very great expense inadvertently incurred in the erection of the buildings, and the inconvenient scites on which they have been placed.

will naturally be careful at the time of their appointment, to be furnished with full powers and authority to act for the whole. This Committee will find it requisite to apply to Parliament for an Act, to invest the future Guardians and Directors with the necessary powers. The Shrewsbury Act has been found by experience to be, upon the whole, very well adapted to answer the end required. But as it is impossible, without experience, to frame a *perfect* Act, so, six years practice has suggested several amendments and improvements, that would be exceedingly useful and salutary. One or two of the most important I will here point out; and upon application to the Directors, or the Secretary, any further information that may be desired, will be most readily communicated. The Directors have a power given them by the Act, to issue their warrants for apprehending vagrants. This relieves the magistrate from a very disagreeable part of the duties of his office; and as the Directors of Houses of Industry are more immediately interested in the care and management of the poor; as the requisite qualification for that office establishes a considerable degree of respectability; as their
number

number is a strong guard and security against any abuse of power; and as it would be one great means of establishing a well regulated police in those cities or large towns where the parishes are thus incorporated: there can be no reasonable objection, but, on the contrary, very powerful inducements, to vest in the Directors a further power, (not less than seven of them being in Board assembled) to take the examination of such vagrants upon oath, and to pass them in the customary manner to their respective settlements; the chairman being authorised to sign such passes. Such a regulation would not only be a great relief to the magistrates, but to the directors and parish officers likewise. That the magistrates and the directors may co-operate in this important point, I would recommend that the chief magistrate for the time being of the city, town, or place where the House of Industry is established, be appointed a director, in addition to the number elected by the parishes.

The clause, requiring such charitable gifts and donations as are not particularly appropriated to be paid to the treasurer, should

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be more explicit, and be a little further extended. The directors should be empowered to superintend and controul the distribution of *all* charitable gifts and legacies left to the disposal of parish officers, provided such distribution be made agreeable to the directions or wills of the respective donors: and it should be enacted, that no such distribution should be made, without the privity, concurrence, and approbation of the Board, under the penalty annexed to disobedience of orders.

The clause dissolving the board, and electing twelve new directors together at the end of every eight years, by guarding against possible danger, introduces a great real evil: depriving the house of the advantages resulting from that knowledge and experience, gained by having been one or two years in the direction. The guardians should have an optional power to re-elect such directors as have not served three years.

The age of disqualification should be extended from sixty, to sixty-five, or seventy. There should also be an additional clause, providing that no person or persons should,
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by reason of their paying to the poor's rates of the parishes so united, be disabled from being a witness upon any hearing or trial concerning the place of settlement, or concerning the vagrancy or removal of poor persons, unless such person be assessed in the *particular* parish to which such poor belong, or from which they are removed.

The next step, after obtaining such an Act, will be to provide a proper building for the purpose intended. It is very desirable that it should be placed in an elevated situation; that the apartments, particularly the dining hall, the principal working rooms, and the dormitories, should be large, lofty, and well ventilated. In the Shrewsbury House, these rooms are 120 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 12 feet high: they run parallel to each other, from the ground floor to the attic; and by means of a number of apertures in the top of the middle partition near the ceiling, a thorough air may at any time be conveyed through them, by opening the windows on each side the house. Another most desirable circumstance, is a plentiful supply of good water. This, our house is furnished with,

with, by means of a small engine, which throws it up from the river, and is worked by the paupers.

Temptations may present themselves to sacrifice some of these advantages, for the sake of saving money at the first outlet. But let it be considered, that the interest of the sum requisite to defray the additional expense, will bear a small proportion to the rates of parishes so united; and that if afterwards it should be found necessary to supply any of these deficiencies, it will be done at a much greater cost. It will also be found highly requisite to erect a detached building, at a sufficient distance from the house, to serve as an Infirmary; furnished with wards for the men and women, with water closets, &c. and likewise separate wards detached from the former, where the poor are to be placed at their first admission, and to remain till they are well purified, and found to be free from any infectious disorder. In the same enclosure should also be placed a working room and dormitory for that class of females, whose separation from the family at large has been so strenuously recommended. We have like-

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wife found a range of small apartments in an out-wing of the building, and not communicating, to be very useful and convenient for the accommodation of the hired weavers, &c.

The first Directors chosen to conduct the undertaking, we will suppose to be selected as persons of good sense, disinterestedness, activity, publick spirit, and comprehensive views; and to have among them a due proportion of gentlemen, whose property and personal consequence will give weight and dignity to their proceedings. As the principal difficulties will occur at the outset, it is highly desirable, that persons of this description should stand forth, to render this most essential service to that portion of the community whereof they are members. To such gentlemen, it is scarce necessary to recommend much temper, prudence, and caution, in the first introduction of new measures. Sudden revolutions commonly excite convulsions; and in the present case, would produce much outrageous clamour, and individual distress. Except in the case of rents, all the regulations I have mentioned were gradually introduced.

introduced. The Directors felt their ground, and did not advance a step further, until they had well secured their present footing: at the same time preserving and maintaining with firmness and vigour every advantage they had gained. It will also be prudent to guard, as much as possible, against those jealousies, which the power it is absolutely necessary to vest in the Directors, is apt to excite.

It will contribute much to the ease and satisfaction of both parties, if the Directors and parish officers cordially unite in pursuing that object, which both have, or ought to have, in view. The overseer will find himself greatly relieved from that care, trouble, and responsibility, which was before attached to his office. He will see no inconsiderable portion of it transferred to the Directors, over and above the many additional objects which will demand their attention. It is presumed he will likewise see, as in the present instance, great good and much advantage resulting to the community at large, and his own parish in particular, from the adoption of this plan. In return, every man, susceptible of generous sentiments, will feel himself

impelled to contribute all the aid and assistance in his power, to lighten the burden of the Directors, and to furnish them with all the information respecting the cases and the characters of the parochial poor, which he is able to obtain.

But though it is necessary for the Directors to proceed with temper and prudence, in the introduction of their plan of reform; yet, when the first difficulties are overcome, and this plan is thoroughly established, it is equally necessary that they should adhere to it with firmness and steadiness. If they allow themselves to dispense with the Rules and Bye-Laws they have enacted, on account of any little inconvenience or expense that may arise in particular instances, their ordinances will soon become a dead letter, and every abuse be again gradually introduced. It will be found, upon the whole, much wiser, and more beneficial, to encounter every incidental expense, which may be incurred in such particular instances, than to dispense with those general rules, the observance of which will, upon the whole, produce so many salutary effects.

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I would also beg leave most earnestly to recommend it to the Directors, to preserve the superintendance and control of the Board over the general management, the contracts, and all other proceedings of the house. If they are fortunate enough to meet with a Secretary well qualified for his important office, they may be tempted by degrees to entrust him with the whole of the internal management; but this will assuredly be found productive of the most injurious consequences. Their servant will become their master: the Board will meet only to sanction *his* measures: those pernicious consequences which follow an abuse of power, will soon manifest themselves; at first, probably in a total neglect of all attention to the morals of the poor; a gradual relaxation of discipline and industry will next take place; this will produce an increase in the expenditure; and in a short time, all the good effects produced by the institution will disappear, all the former abuses recur: and an establishment that might have continued an inestimable blessing to the community, and to the poor themselves, become itself an evil, and increase those burdens it was so admirably adapted to remove.

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This fatal reverse can only be avoided, by a firm, steady, and constant exercise of the power vested in the Weekly Board; by the regular inspection and superintendence of the three Committees, and the House Visitors; by vigorously resisting every encroachment; or by resuming the reins when they have been artfully wrested out of their hands. Ten thousand times better would it be, at once to dismiss an officer of this description, whatever may be his qualifications, than, through an excess of timidity or groundless apprehension, suffer so fatal a precedent to be established.

I have been the more particular and earnest on this head, because this is the fatal rock on which these establishments are most in danger of suffering shipwreck. An attention to the management of the parochial poor, being a matter in which the individual pursuits, and personal concerns of the Directors are by no means interested, they are naturally tempted to become negligent in their attendance; and, when affairs are got into a good train, they are too prone to indulge the idea that this constant and regular inspection and control may be dispensed with. Experience demon-

strates

states that this will ever be found a most fatal mistake.

The reader of this account will have seen in the foregoing pages, what has been effected by the Shrewsbury Institution. For seven years its progress towards all the perfection that human establishments are capable of, was rapid and glorious: but, alas! an opinion was then unfortunately entertained, that the chief merit of these attainments rested with the principal domestic officer. In consequence of this very mistaken idea, a blind and implicit confidence was reposed in him; and, he artfully improved the opportunity to wrest out of the hands of the Board of Directors, almost the whole internal management of the house concerns. The consequence has been precisely what was predicted in the former edition, and has just been again stated in this: namely, "the servant is become the master; general discipline and individual industry is grievously relaxed; and, the pecuniary advantages enjoyed by the united parishes, though yet important, are by no means so considerable, as with strict economy might be experienced." Insuperable difficulties

are

are also thrown in the way of every attempt made by individual Directors to correct the abuses that prevail; and, I much fear, that nothing short of an united and vigorous effort of the whole Board; together with the appointment of domestic officers, who will deem it their bounden duty to obey the regulations prescribed in the Bye-Laws, to consult the Directors, cordially to co-operate with them, and follow their instructions; will be found sufficient to remedy those abuses that now prevail, and root out those noxious weeds that have been suffered to propagate themselves in this rich soil. It is yet very practicable to retrace our wanderings. *One firm, resolute, and united exertion*; —a determined and invariable adherence to those regulations which have been found so practicable, and so beneficial;—will retrieve all; and enable us to regain and secure that high reputation which our establishment had acquired throughout the kingdom at large. Need I add, that the inestimable benefits which will be derived from the success of such an effort; and the good we shall be the instruments of securing, to that portion of the community to which providence hath attached us; will entitle us to some of the noblest feelings

feelings that can take place in the human heart.

Neither let it be forgot, that all the attendance which will be requisite, can by no means be deemed a very irksome or laborious task. Two or three hours on the weekly board day, for the external concerns of the united parishes; and less time still on any other day, for superintending the internal concerns of the House of Industry, will be all that will be requisite, *provided that these attendances are regular and unremitted.* And what is this, when compared with the great good that will be derived from the due government of such an establishment?

To those who may have similar Institutions in view, I need make no apology for this digression, if such it may be deemed. They may derive an important benefit from our *transient* errors; for such only I hope and trust they will prove; and they will recollect the good old adage,

ALIENA PERICULA CAUTUM.

With respect to the debt that will be contracted,

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tracted, by purchasing or erecting the necessary buildings, &c. it is to be observed on the one hand, that continuing very heavy levies, in order the more speedily to discharge it, is saddling the present occupiers of land and houses with an unreasonable expense, for the benefit of those who will succeed them. And, on the other hand, that it is highly necessary this debt should be *gradually* and *regularly* liquidated. Whilst it remains, it will be a sad clog upon those exertions that will be found requisite. In years of extraordinary expense, arising from the dearness of provisions, the prevalence of epidemical diseases among the poor, or various other causes, it will oblige the Directors to call for larger payments, and, of consequence, the assessments must be again raised more than would be necessary, were the debt annihilated; and this will excite much prejudice and clamour. *It will also operate as a discouragement to further improvements:* and it will render the success of the undertaking much more precarious. A man struggling with a heavy debt, is often ruined by those difficulties, which, if he were not thus encumbered, would produce no material bad consequence:
and

and the observation will strictly apply to the case before us. It is certainly therefore a dictate of wisdom and prudence to adopt the determination before-mentioned; namely, gradually and regularly to reduce this debt, until the whole be paid off and discharged. The Directors of the SHREWSBURY HOUSE OF INDUSTRY came to a resolution to apply two hundred and fifty pounds per annum, out of the savings, for this purpose. This resolution is strongly recommended as a proper medium between discharging the debt too hastily, and not reducing it all. A trifling diminution of the assessment may indeed *for the present* be obtained, by suffering the whole debt to remain; and a *transient* popularity be acquired, by adopting such a measure: but what is this in comparison with the risk and hazard that will be thereby incurred? Nor is this the only mischief that will ensue. It will produce an opposition to every plan for extending the beneficial effects and advantages of the establishment: an opposition that will cool the ardour, and discourage the exertions of those Directors who are disposed to act upon enlarged and liberal views. And, if there should be a considerable difference in the average payments of the different parishes

united in the undertaking, such a measure might operate more for the relief of one parish than of the rest; and this would open a door to jealousies, and introduce that disunion and discord, which would give a fatal stab to its prosperity and success. And after all, where five or six parishes are united, the reduction would be so very insignificant, as to be unworthy the attention of such parishes at large.

A policy too limited and confined, damps and extinguishes every generous sentiment and emotion of the heart. If it should ever prevail in undertakings of this nature, they will soon cease to be of any utility; and then, this short-lived popularity might be succeeded by general reproach.

I beg leave, therefore, to conclude these *Hints*, and my subject, by exhorting the conductors of such institutions, never to deviate from those measures, which appear, *upon the whole*, best calculated to secure complete and lasting success. Let *all* the great and valuable purposes which may be obtained by means of

of these establishments, be ever kept in view, and invariably pursued. When the first difficulties are surmounted, and success crowns their endeavours, let them not stop short, and say, It is enough: but rather, animated and encouraged by that success, let them proceed with redoubled ardour, until they have attained the utmost possible perfection. — When they have relieved their fellow citizens by lightening the burden of parochial taxes; — when they have added to the publick stock the labour of those who are now supported in idleness; — brought those, who are now a burden and reproach to their country, to contribute largely to its prosperity; — and, above all, when, by due culture and discipline, they have improved their morals; *adopted every prudent and salutary precaution, to prevent their endeavours from being counteracted*; and by these means succeed in rendering their Houses of Industry, Seminaries of Virtue; and see their young Poor from these Asylums falling into the world, and filling up their respective stations and relations in life, with credit to themselves and honour to their parochial guardians:—

guardians:—then may they successively retire from their posts in the Direction, with that heart-felt satisfaction, that unutterable delight and exultation, which will amply reward their patriotic labours.

BYE-

BYE-LAWS, &c.

RELATIVE TO
THE GENERAL AND EXTERNAL CONCERNS
OF THE
HOUSE OF INDUSTRY.

I.

THAT the acting Officer of each of the United Parishes, or in case of sickness or absence on necessary business, another Officer in his place and stead, attend each weekly Court,* before the hour of eleven in the forenoon.

II.

THAT they make themselves acquainted with the situations, circumstances, and characters of persons applying for relief, and report the same to the Directors.

III.

THAT they do not defray any lying-in expenses, or relieve any pauper whatsoever, but by order of the weekly Court, except in cases of sudden emergency, and then only with the consent of three Directors.

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* The weekly Court is held by three or more of the twelve Directors.

IV.

THAT they do not order, or engage to defray the expense of any coffin or other funeral charges, without the written consent of three Directors.

V.

THAT they give notice to the weekly Court of all persons likely to become chargeable, who may come to reside within their respective parishes, not belonging thereto, nor bringing certificates from their last legal places of settlement, within forty days of their so coming to reside therein, agreeably to the directions of the Act.

VI.

THAT they use their utmost endeavours to obtain the earliest information of all single women in a state of pregnancy, resident within their respective parishes, and give notice thereof to the next weekly Court.

VII.

THAT they keep regular accounts of their weekly pay, occasional relief, and other incidental expenses, and produce the same once a fortnight to the Directors at their weekly Courts, in order to their being examined and allowed.

VIII.

THAT they insert in their books, the names, ages, number of family, state of health, and residence of the poor relieved by order of the Directors.

IX.

THAT they deliver all certificates, passes, orders of removal, orders of filiation, letters, and all other papers

papers respecting the Poor, to the next weekly Court after receiving the same, in order to their being filed by the Steward.

X.

THAT the Steward give them copies of such orders and directions, as they are respectively required to carry into execution.

XI.

THAT no *weekly* pay be allowed to the Out-poor (children at nurse excepted) unless in cases of lunacy, sickness, or where their admission into the House shall be judged improper by the weekly Court.

XII.

THAT children shall not be taken into the House before they are two years old, nor continued at nurse (except in very particular cases) after the age of four,

XIII.

THAT where families are too large to maintain themselves by their own labour, the mode of relief shall be by taking one or more of the children into the House, at the discretion of the Directors.

XIV.

THAT no pauper whatsoever be admitted into the House without an order of the weekly Court, or, in cases of emergency, a written order signed by three Directors.

XV.

THAT no Clothing whatsoever be allowed to the Out-poor, except in case of sickness, when the week-

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ly Court, or, if immediately necessary, the Committee for the distribution of clothing may exercise a discretionary power.

XVI.

THAT, to prevent improper expense or imposition, no sum be allowed towards any funeral, where the pauper is not buried entirely at the charge of the united parishes, and in the accustomed manner.

XVII.

THAT paupers admitted into the House for temporary relief only, shall not be deprived of their household goods or other property.

XVIII.

THAT an Apothecary be annually appointed, who shall, by himself or his approved deputy, duly attend and administer proper medicines to such sick poor, both within and out of the House, as may be put under his care by the Directors; and that he shall make a weekly report to the Court of their Names and Cases, in a book provided for that purpose.

XIX.

THAT the latter part of the 31st Rule for the Internal Government of the House be advertised twice every year, the first week in January and the first week in July, in the Shrewsbury Chronicle, as also a Caution to the keepers of Lodging-Houses, not to take in and harbour single pregnant Women who do not belong to the united parishes; and offering a Reward to any person giving information where such women are harboured and concealed.

BYE-

BYE-LAWS, &c.

RELATIVE

TO THE INTERNAL GOVERNMENT

OF THE

HOUSE OF INDUSTRY.

I.

THAT the Steward and Matron reside within the House; that they be not on any occasion absent at the same time, and that neither of them be out later than ten o'clock at night, without leave from three or more of the Directors.

II.

THAT in case the Steward or Matron shall absent him or herself, contrary to the meaning of the above Rule, the door-keeper is required to report the same to the Weekly Court the following Monday, on pain of being discharged from his place.

III.

THAT the Steward and Matron shall have a separate table to themselves.

IV.

THAT the Steward and Matron see that all the servants, and persons employed in the House, perform their duty in their respective departments, and that these Bye-Laws, Rules and Ordinances be carried into full effect.

V.

V.

THAT the Steward and Matron shall allot the quantity of provision for each day's consumption,* agreeable to the following Bill of Fare; shall see them weighed, and take care that the Cook, with proper assistance, dress and distribute the same.

BILL

* QUANTITY.

BREAKFAST.—A pint of milk-porridge or broth with eight and a half ounces of bread, to each adult, children in proportion.

DINNER.—Nine ounces of meat, six ounces of bread, a trencher full of roots or greens, and a pint of beer, to each adult, Working boys and girls, five ounces of meat, four ounces of bread, with roots or greens, and half a pint of beer.—N. B. The younger children drink water. Bread and cheese dinner, twelve ounces of bread and six ounces of cheese, adults; eight ounces of bread and four ounces of cheese, boys and girls.

SUPPER.—A pint of broth or soup, nine ounces of bread, adults; children in proportion. Potatoe suppers; a trencher full, mashed with milk, and a pint of beer.—N. B. To prevent the trouble of weighing each separate mess, when one has been weighed, the rest are ascertained by the bulk.

BILL OF FARE.

BREAKFAST.		DINNER.		SUPPER.
<i>Sunday,</i>	Broth.	Butcher's meat and garden stuff.	- -	Broth.
<i>Monday,</i>	Milk-porridge.	Bread and cheese.	- - -	Mashed potatoes.
<i>Tuesday,</i>	Ditto.	Stewed meat with potatoes or garden stuff.	other } - - }	Pease soup.
<i>Wednesday,</i>	Ditto.	Pease pudding and stewed pork.	- -	Broth.
<i>Thursday,</i>	Broth.	Butcher's meat and garden stuff.	- -	Ditto.
<i>Friday,</i>	Milk-porridge.	Yeast dumplings, or hot cake (1lb. for a grown up person, younger in proportion) and milk.	- - - }	Mashed potatoes.
<i>Saturday,</i>	Ditto.	Stewed meat, with potatoes or garden stuff.	other } - - }	Broth.

VI.

THAT the Steward shall examine the goodness and price of provisions ; shall superintend the weighing, and compare the quantities thereof, and of all other goods whatsoever, with the tradesmen's bills of parcels.

VII.

THAT the Steward and Matron shall take care that the larder, kitchen, back-kitchen, and other offices, together with the utensils and furniture thereof, be kept sweet, clean and decent. That the dining hall, tables and seats be cleaned immediately after each meal, and the several wards or dormitories every morning before, or immediately after breakfast, when the windows thereof shall be thrown open, the doors locked, and the keys delivered to them ; and that the strictest cleanliness and decency be observed in every part of the House.

VIII.

THAT the Steward take care that Grace be said before and after Meat, read, or cause to be read, Prayers every morning before breakfast, and every evening before supper, that every Person in the House, not necessarily engaged elsewhere, be required to attend ; and that a list of absentees, if any, be laid before the next Weekly Court.

IX.

THAT the Steward and Matron take care that every person in the House, Nurses excepted, do go to bed, and the fires and candles be extinguished,
at

at nine o'clock from the first of May to the first of September, and at eight from the first of September to the first of May.

X.

THAT, to avoid infectious distempers, the Steward shall not place any person in the wards, without being first carefully examined and washed, and, if thought necessary, new clothed; and in this case the Steward shall cause the old clothes to be well cleaned; and, if there be a probability that such person will be discharged from the house, his or her old clothes shall be kept, in order to be re-delivered at the time of dismissal, in exchange for the clothes found by the House.

XI.

THAT the Steward shall regularly and distinctly keep the following Accounts for the constant inspection of the Directors: *viz.*

A Book of Assignments.

A General Order Book.

Minutes of the Proceedings at the Weekly Courts.

A Ledger, No. 1. containing Accounts with the Debtors and Creditors of the House.

A Book of Receipts and Disbursements.

— Ditto, abstracted under various heads.

A Weekly Abstract of the Cash Account.

A State of the Year's Account to the 15th of July in each Year.

A List of the In-Poor, with their Ages, Time of Admittance and Discharge, &c. and occasional Remarks.

A Ledger, No. 2. containing Accounts respecting the Manufactory.

A Men's Clothing Book, with an Alphabetical List of the Persons to whom Clothes are distributed, Columns for the various Articles, the Time when given, and the Value thereof.

A Women's ditto.

An Account of each piece of Flannel or other Goods manufactured, the number of Yards, prime Cost, and Value, &c. &c.

XII.

THAT the Steward shall deliver in to each Weekly Court, a List of all the Poor received into, or discharged from the House the preceding Week.

XIII.

THAT no Bill above the Sum of £5. be discharged till it hath been laid before the Weekly Court, and an order made by the Directors for the payment thereof.

XIV.

THAT the Matron do distribute such milk, pearl-barley, rice, or other necessaries to the young children and the sick, as the Physicians or Apothecary shall direct in a book of diet, to be lodged in the hands of the Matron for that purpose.

XV.

THAT the wards or dormitories be supplied with clean sheets once a month, or oftener if necessary; and the Poor with clean linen once a week.

XVI.

XVI.

THAT the Matron deliver to the Laundress an inventory of the articles to be washed, by which inventory the same shall be compared when returned from the washing; and if any loss or deficiency shall happen, she report the same to the next Weekly Court.

XVII.

THAT the Matron shall take care that such Girls as are of proper age be, by rotation, employed and instructed as much as may be, in cookery, housewifery, washing, scouring, and such other work as may best qualify them for service.

XVIII.

THAT the Matron recommend proper Nurses to the Weekly Court, by which they are to be appointed.

XIX.

THAT the Nurses cause all the children under their care to have their hands and faces washed, and their hair combed every morning, by the hour appointed for beginning to work.

XX.

THAT the Nurses give immediate information of the Death of any person under their care to the Steward, who shall cause the corpse to be conveyed in due time to the place appointed for that purpose, and shall provide a coffin and jersey for the funeral; that they also deliver to the Steward all the clothes, money, or goods belonging to the person deceased, and to the magistrates of the Poor, or to the overseers of the Poor, as they shall think fit.

an inventory whereof he shall lay before the next Weekly Court.

XXI.

THAT the Poor shall breakfast, dine and sup together in the dining-hall, except such only as are by age or infirmity rendered unable, or improper objects to attend in that place, of whom proper care must be taken in separate apartments.

XXII.

THAT the Poor be called up by Ring of Bell, and set to such work as their several abilities will permit, from Six o'Clock in the morning to Six in the evening, from the first of March to the middle of October; and from Seven in the morning till such hour at night as the Directors may appoint, from the middle of October to the first of March; being allowed half an hour at breakfast and an hour at dinner. That nevertheless they shall not work on Sundays; Saturday afternoons from Four o'Clock; Good Friday; Christmas-Day and the two following days; and Monday and Tuesday in the Easter and Whitsun weeks, and on Shrewsbury Show-day.

XXIII.

THAT in order to excite the Poor to industry, they shall be rewarded every Saturday with a gratuity of one sixth part of the value of their week's work, except in cases of misconduct.

XXIV.

THAT a standing Committee of three or more Directors be appointed for the management of the Manufactory,

Manufactory, who shall report their proceedings to the Weekly Court every fortnight; and that without the orders of two members of that Committee, no goods, manufactured or unmanufactured, be bought or sold.

XXV.

THAT a standing Committee of three Directors be likewise appointed for the purpose of distributing such wearing apparel, as any two of them may judge necessary to be given to the Poor.

XXVI.

THAT the linen, wearing apparel, and bed-clothes, be mended under the direction of the Matron, by such of the Poor as are capable of so doing.

XXVII.

THAT the House-Barber shall shave the Men-poor at least every week, and cut the children's hair as often as necessary.

XXVIII.

THAT no person be admitted to see any of the Poor within the House, but by leave of the Steward, or in his absence, of the Matron. Nor any of the Poor be allowed to go out without permission of the Steward, who shall limit the time of their return. The Steward to lay before the Weekly Court a list of those who have had leave of absence during the preceding week.

XXIX.

XXIX.

THAT the Porter shall carefully keep the Doors and Gates, and shall not suffer any person to pass in or out without proper permission, nor allow strong or spirituous liquors to be brought in, unless prescribed by the Physicians or Apothecary; and that he lock the Doors and Gates and deliver up the Keys to the Steward, or in his absence, to the Matron, immediately after the hour of going to bed.

XXX.

THAT one or more Schoolmasters and Mistresses be appointed, who shall keep the children in good order, and instruct them in reading and other useful branches; such as are not employed in the manufactory or work of the House, to be taught from eight to eleven in the morning, and from one to four in the afternoon; and such as are so employed, at those hours when they can be best spared from their work.

XXXI.

THAT if any Officer, Nurse, or Servant of the House receive any Fee or Gratuity, from any Tradesman, or from the Poor, or their Friends, they shall be immediately discharged from their employments; and if any Tradesman shall be known to bestow any Fee or Gratuity on any Officer or Servant of the House, he shall be deemed incapable of serving the said House in future.

XXXII.

THAT an inventory and appraisement of all the Fixtures, Furniture, working Implements, and
Goods

Goods manufactured and unmanufactured, be laid before the Weekly Court upon the last Monday in July in each year, by the Steward; in which shall be particularly specified such new Furniture or Implements as have been purchased within the year. And that a clear state of the year's account be then made out by him.

XXXIII.

THAT as the personal comfort of the Poor, the instruction and morals of the younger part of them, their attention to labour, and the economical management of the House, depend much upon a constant and vigilant inspection into its interior concerns, there shall be always two or more Directors appointed by the Weekly Court, as a Visiting Committee, each to act a fortnight, and then to be succeeded by others in rotation; but that no new Director may, from want of experience, be at a loss how to execute the Office of Visitor, at the end of every week one of them to go out, and another be associated with the remaining Visitor appointed the week before, by whom he will be attended the week ensuing.

XXXIV:

THAT the Visiting Committee daily, or as often as possible, attend the House, see that the Poor, particularly the Sick, be taken care of, and regularly attended by the Apothecary and Nurses; that all infectious persons be removed to the apartments appointed for their reception; that the Schoolmasters

Schoolmasters and Mistresses do their duty; that the working Poor be diligent in their respective employments; that the House be kept clean, the windows of the Dormitories kept open in the day time, and the doors of those rooms be locked. That they compare the flour sent in with the samples; examine the bread, beer, and other provisions; enquire into the complaints and the offences of the Poor, and enter in a book kept for that purpose, whatever observations strike them as material.

XXXV.

THAT the Chaplain of the House read Prayers and preach a Sermon to the Poor every Sunday afternoon, administer the Sacrament the first Sunday in January, and the first Sunday in July, in each year, catechise the children once a month, visit such of the sick as shall desire it, and perform the other duties of his function.

XXXVI.

THAT for the more effectually maintaining perfect order and good government in the House, if any person shall profanely curse or swear, or appear to be in liquor, he shall be immediately confined in the Stocks, by order of the Visiting Committee or Steward, for any time not exceeding four hours; or if any persons having permission to go out of the House, shall not return within the time allowed, or shall return drunk or disorderly, or shall be otherwise refractory or disobedient to the reasonable orders of the Steward or Matron, or if they shall pretend

pretend sickness, or make any false excuse in order to avoid working, or if they shall wilfully destroy or spoil any materials or implements, or if they shall be guilty of dishonest practices, breach of trust, lewd, indecent, immoral or disorderly behaviour, or of any other mischief or transgression, repugnant to the peace and well-being of the House, they shall be admonished or confined, according to the magnitude of their offences, at the discretion of the Visiting Committee or Steward, and the case be reported to the next Weekly Court, when the offender, upon conviction, shall be sentenced to suffer such corporal punishment, confinement, task-work, distinction of dress, abatement of diet, or loss of gratuity, as the Directors shall judge proper, agreeably to the powers vested in them by the Act.

XXXVII.

THAT these Bye-Laws, Rules and Ordinances, be read once a year at the General Meeting, the second Monday in August, after the Election of new Directors.

RULES

RULES

TO BE

HUNG UP IN THE HOUSE.

THE POOR IN THIS HOUSE

ARE REQUIRED TO OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING RULES.

I.

THAT they obey the Steward and Matron
in all their reasonable commands.

II.

THAT they demean themselves orderly and peace-
ably, with decency and cleanliness.

III.

THAT they never drink to excess.

IV.

THAT they be diligent at their work.

V.

THAT they work from six o'clock in the morn-
ing till six at night, in summer; and from seven in
the

the morning till such hours in the evening, as the Directors shall appoint, in the winter; except on Saturday afternoons from four o'clock; and on Good-Friday, Christmas-Day and the two days following; and Monday and Tuesday in the Easter and Whitsun weeks, and Shrewsbury Show day, which are to be regarded as holidays.

VI.

THAT they do not pretend sickness, or other excuses to avoid their work.

VII.

THAT they do no wilful damage, but execute their work to the best of their abilities; one sixth part of their earnings to be given them every Saturday, by way of gratuity or reward for their diligence, except in cases of misconduct.

VIII.

THAT they regularly attend divine service on Sundays, and prayers before breakfast and supper every day.

IX.

THAT they go to breakfast, to dinner, and to supper, in the Dining-Hall, when summoned by Ring of Bell.

X.

THAT they be allowed half an hour at breakfast, and an hour at dinner.

XI.

THAT no strong or spirituous liquors be allowed

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in the House, except by order of the Physicians, or Apothecary.

XII.

THAT they do not curse, nor swear, nor lie.

XIII.

THAT they do not steal, sell their provisions or clothing, nor be guilty of any other breach of trust.

XIV.

THAT they never go out during working hours, nor at any other time, without leave.

XV.

THAT when permitted to go out, they do not stay longer than the hour appointed.

WHOEVER shall offend against the above Rules, will be punished either by confinement in the stocks, or in the dungeon, or elsewhere, or by distinction of dress, by abatement of diet, loss of gratuity, or by such corporal or other punishment as may be determined and adjudged by the Weekly Court of Directors, according to the powers vested in them by the Act of Parliament.

RULES

RULES**FOR****THE REGULATION****OF THE*****WEEKLY AND QUARTERLY COURTS.***

I.

THAT a Weekly Court be held every Monday between the Hours of Ten and Two, agreeably to the Act; and at every Court, whether weekly, quarterly, or special, a Chairman be elected by the Directors present, who shall preside over, and regulate the proceedings, and who, in case of an equal division, shall have a casting vote.

II.

THAT the orders of the last Court be first read.

III.

THAT if any matter be proposed by a Member and seconded by another, it shall be debated, and, if desired

desired, put to a Vote, before any other business be considered.

IV.

THAT after the business of the day is concluded, the minutes of the proceedings be read over.

V.

THAT a Table of the Days on which the quarterly Courts are required by the Act to be held, shall be hung up in the Court Room.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

IN consequence of my intention to add to this edition some Introductory Observations on the present State of the Poor, and the defective System of the Poor's Laws; and of an unavoidable delay in the execution of my purpose; the foregoing Account has lain for twelve months in the publisher's hands, after having passed through the press. This delay, however, has enabled me to avail myself of several recent and valuable publications on the subject; and to annex likewise a detail of some interesting particulars, that may furnish useful information to those who conduct similar Institutions, as well as to those who may have them in view.

At pages 69—72 of the preceding Account, I have pointed out the pernicious consequences that will ever ensue from relaxed attention on the part of the Directors, and from reposing a blind and implicit confidence

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in the domestic Officers; and expressed my conviction, that nothing short of an united and vigorous effort, a firm and resolute exertion of the BOARD, could remedy the abuses that had crept into the management of the Shrewsbury House, and restore its former usefulness. I am happy now to be able to state, that this exertion has taken place, and that its beneficial consequences have fully equalled the expectations that were formed concerning them. Not the least of those benefits is, that the important lesson, thus bought by experience, together with the precautionary regulations it has been the means of suggesting, furnish a moral security against relapsing into the same mistaken line of conduct. In subjoining a detail of those regulations, the sole object I have in view is, to communicate to other Institutions such practical information, as I conceive they may improve and build upon, so as to secure still more important advantages; and I should be highly gratified, if these communications proved of the least service, in enabling others to steer clear of the difficulties we have had to encounter; and to enjoy without interruption that success, which uniformly crowned the labours of our Directors, so long as they held the reins in their own hands; and which now again smiles upon them, with the prospect

spect of deriving additional and permanent security, from the transient error of their predecessors.

Prudence is infinitely preferable to the *redress* of evils. To retrace devious wanderings, recover lost authority, and resume the right path; is at once an arduous and irksome task. The men who set themselves to oppose abuses that have been suffered to take root and expand, must expect to meet with violent opposition, and no small portion of illiberal reproach; to have the purity of their intentions called in question, and to be accused of being actuated by personal resentment, and interested views. It may be their lot to meet with a virulent opposer, who will set no bounds to his malignity; but, like Solomon's madman, take delight in scattering fire-brands, arrows, and death. Let them not be discouraged. Conscious integrity will support them while buffeting the angry billows, and encountering the raging storm; and they will enjoy supreme satisfaction, when the good ship is steered safe into port.

A minute and careful investigation having taken place with respect to the internal concerns of the House, it appeared, that in

the manufactory, the raw material was committed to the care of individual paupers, some of them not very properly selected for that purpose; and that there was a *general* want of those check-books, or daily entries, necessary to ascertain the waste and loss of the raw material in passing through the various processes, or to detect any embezzlement or fraud. In one department, where such a check account *was* kept, for the purpose of ascertaining gratuities; for want of previous, and subsequent counter-entries, it was in the power of the woman employed, to set down at random what quantities she pleased, without detection; and she regularly for weeks together set down two hundred and forty pounds of wool per week, as having passed through the machines, when it clearly appeared, from particular enquiry, that not half that quantity was, during those weeks, delivered out for working. Check-books are now kept for every process, wherein are entered the quantity of the raw material, or of the yarn, daily delivered out for working, and the quantity received back again after going through each process. The opposite sides of these accounts are cast up at regular periods, by which is at once seen whether the whole quantity delivered out, has been duly accounted for. These books

books are laid before the Weekly Boards, and the manufacturing Committee may in a quarter or half an hour examine the whole account.

The gratuities to the paupers employed, were allowed in proportion to the quantity of work done by weight or measure; the consequence of which was, that they hurried over their work in a very imperfect manner, for the purpose of enlarging their gratuities. They have now a given quantity of the raw material to work upon, and are ordered not to be allowed their gratuity, unless it is executed in a workmanlike manner.

In the Provision-stores, the waste and abuse were found to be very considerable indeed. In these departments, as well as in the manufactory, the poor employed in baking, cooking, &c. had access to the stores, and helped themselves. As the first step to a reform, the number of the paupers in the house, classed as adults or children, was made out from an actual muster. A correct account was next taken of the quantity consumed during the first week. The full allowance, as settled by our diet-table, which has been universally admitted to be on a very liberal scale, was then calculated; and the due proportion of each article

article delivered out for each day's consumption. At the same time, great care was exerted to see that the poor had justice done them while the experiment was tried; and that these allowances were not unfairly curtailed, but the whole delivered out to them at their different meals. They remained fully satisfied, and not a single complaint was heard. Indeed they had, and have, reason to be so; for in consequence of the care now taken to prevent waste, and also in the provision contracts, particularly for butchers' meat, they are better off than before.

To remove all pretence or ground for injurious insinuations, a fresh account has recently been taken by the desire of the Directors, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the poor continued to receive their due allowances, and what was the actual amount thereof, as charged to the house, and making a part of the disbursements. In the important articles of butchers' meat and flour, the result was as follows. The actual weekly consumption of the former, allowing seventy pounds for the matron's table, kitchen and sick, amounted to twenty eight pounds more than the allowance stated in that diet-table which was settled twelve years ago, and has ever since been considered

as the fixed standard. And in the article of flour, the adults had, one day with another, throughout the week, somewhat more than one pound five ounces per day, and the children their full proportion; each boy and girl above thirteen, having the full allowance of adults. On the hot-cake days, (when this article constitutes their dinner) the adults had a pound and half each; on the five other days, one with another, a pound and quarter *per day*.* In the other articles, the consumption was likewise somewhat beyond the standard allowance in the diet-table. From this account, taken near twelve months after the reform had been effected, it is fully demonstrated that no diminution of expenditure has taken place in consequence of reduced allowances to the poor. For the full quantities specified, are charged to that expenditure, and the butchers' and other bills, together with the mill account of flour, have been regularly produced as vouchers for the same.

As a means of effectually preventing a return of the abuses that had prevailed, fresh Bye-Laws were enacted, providing,

That

* During the present scarcity and high price of corn, the poor have a double allowance of potatoes instead of bread, at their dinners, two days in the week.

That check-books should be kept in the different departments of the manufactory, in which regular entries should be made of the quantity of the raw material received *in*, and the quantity *issued* from time to time, for the purpose of passing through each separate process. And that these entries should be regularly examined by the manufacturing committee.

That whenever the work done by any individual should be executed in a careless, or unworkmanlike manner, and when any of the poor employed should not duly perform such reasonable task as should be required of them; the gratuity of every such person should, in the first instance, be withheld; and upon continued misconduct, such further punishment, by distinction of dress, or abatement of diet, as should be proportionate to their respective demerits. In cases of embezzlement, theft, or fraud, the offenders to be delivered over to the magistrate, to be dealt with according to law.

That the steward should from time to time, faithfully report to the Board, any misconduct, negligence, waste, embezzlement, or fraud, committed by the poor, which should come to his knowledge, in order that due enquiry might be made into the same, and proper

proper punishment, agreeable to the foregoing Bye-Law, be inflicted on the offenders.

That for the encouragement of industry and good conduct, honorary distinctions or other recompenses, should be awarded at stated periods, by the Directors in Board assembled, to such individuals as should appear best to deserve such rewards. But that profane language or immoral conduct, should be an entire bar to such distinctions.

That alphabetical books should be prepared, in which should be entered the names of all the men and boys on one side, and women and girls on the other, with columns opposite to each name for every article of clothing. And that in these books regular entries should be made from time to time, of each garment, &c. delivered out to the poor of the family, with the date of each such delivery, and the price of the article. That the amount of these disbursements should be cast up, examined, and signed, by two or more of the Clothing Committee, at intervals not exceeding one month.

That the Steward should also from time to time, make out lists of the poor in want

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of

of clothing, specifying the garment, &c. wanted; in order that a personal inspection by the Clothing Committee might take place, and reference being had to the clothing books for the purpose of ascertaining whether a reasonable time had elapsed since the pauper was allowed the same garment, such apparel might be issued as the Committee should order and direct. No clothing to be distributed but in consequence of such orders; and the price or prime cost of each article to be ascertained and settled by the Committee, after due enquiry respecting the same. The amount of the year's disbursements in clothing, to be regularly taken and made out, at the times of closing the annual accounts of the House.

That the Matron should in like manner make out a weekly list of the poor in want of linen, and not distribute the same till ordered by the Committee.

That check-books should likewise be kept for the different articles of provision, one for each separate article; in which should be regularly entered the stock upon hand, the quantities of each from time to time received into store, and the daily issues thereof. That the check-book for flour should, on the side
appro-

appropriated for entering the daily consumption, contain two columns, in one of which should be entered the weight of the flour delivered out for each day's baking, and opposite thereto in the other column, the weight of the bread produced therefrom, which for that purpose should be weighed immediately after being taken from the oven, in the presence of the steward. That there should also be kept a general store-book, containing columns for butchers' meat, flour, garden-stuff, cheese, and beer; into which the proper entries should be transcribed from the other books, and the whole be balanced weekly, laid before the Board, examined, and signed by a Director.*

That the Steward should take charge of the flour in store, and keep the flour-room constantly locked up, except at such times as the article is received in, or delivered out; at which times he shall on no account be absent, or suffer the business to be done by a deputy. That he shall make the regular entries in the flour store-book of the quantity from time to time received in, deliver out to the baker the quantity allowed for each day's consumption *by weight*, and see the bread weighed after baking.

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That

* A specimen of these store-books is subjoined.

That the Matron should in like manner take charge of the butchers' meat, the bread, when delivered from the bake-house, the potatoes or other garden-stuff, the milk, butter, cheese, beer of both sorts, salt, oatmeal, peas, and groceries. That she should keep these several stores always locked up, except at such times as they are received in, or delivered out for daily use. That at those times the Matron, or Assistant-Matron, should constantly attend in person, and on no account suffer this business to be done by any other in their absence. That she should keep regular accounts in the check store-books of the quantity of each article received from time to time into the several stores, deliver out the meat and cheese by weight, the potatoes, beer, and milk, by measure, in such quantities only as should be allowed for each day's consumption; and on no account connive at any embezzlement or waste, or suffer more than the quantity allowed to be delivered out to the persons employed about the same.

That the Matron should take care that the beer be brewed according to the prescribed directions, both with regard to the quantity of malt, treacle, and hops, and likewise the quantity of beer of each sort to be brewed there-

therefrom; and inform herself by personal inspection, that the hogsheds and other vessels were filled after each brewing, with the full quantity of liquor which ought to be produced.

That no provisions or beer should upon any account be given to labourers or others, except what was directed and allowed by the diet-table, or special orders of the Board.

That the baker, brewer, dairy-maids, cooks, or bread-cutter, should be immediately dismissed from their employments, if they disposed of, or suffered to be taken away, any of the articles respectively committed to their care. The dairy-maid, bread-cutter, and cooks, should keep the dairy, bread-room, and pantry, constantly locked up, except at such times as they themselves were employed therein, and deliver up the keys every night to the Matron.

That the Matron should faithfully report to the Board from time to time, any misconduct, embezzlement, or waste, committed by the poor, which should come to her knowledge; in order that due enquiry might be made into the same, and suitable punishment as aforesaid be inflicted on the offenders.

That

That whenever the consumption of any one or more of the articles of provision should exceed the quantities allowed in the table of diet, the Matron should account to the Board for such excess, and the Steward should do the same with respect to the article of flour.

That the examination of the general store-book, should constantly make a part of each week's business, at the Board of Directors.

The judicious reader will observe, that all the care and attention required by the foregoing regulations, is imposed upon the servants of the House, particularly the Steward and Matron. But the former having an assistant allowed him in the counting house, and the latter the same advantage in her department, the duty is by no means more laborious than what may very reasonably be required from them. In fact, what may appear formidable in the detail, is by no means difficult in the practice. Those who know the advantage of method and order, and how much may be accomplished with facility, when every day has its allotted routine of duty and service, will give me credit for this assertion.

With

With respect to the Directors, very little addition is made to their duty by these regulations. They were in the habit of examining weekly the general account of receipts and disbursements, and they may go over the additional check and store-books in a quarter or half an hour. All that is requisite on their parts is *regularity* and *perseverance*; and they have adopted a very judicious plan of allotting separate portions of their time for attending to the *external* and *internal* concerns of this establishment.

After discussing the cases and applications of the out-poor, they were wont to go over the house accounts at the same Board. The consequence was, that by the time the former business was concluded, it became inconvenient to the Directors to prolong their sittings; their attention necessarily flagged, and the house accounts were hastily hurried over, nor could any further time be spared for deliberating on its concerns. They now hold another board-day each week, for the purpose of attending *solely* to the internal concerns of this Institution. Thus the time taken up by their *previous* sitting, is proportionably shortened; while great advantage is derived from allotting a separate Board for the house concerns. And
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if even this regulation should be found inconvenient, or be considered as expecting too much from each individual Director, three of them may attend by rotation on the second board-day, which would then (where the number of Directors is twelve) only fall to their lot one week, or one month in four. It is thus that a *regular*, not a *laborious* attendance and attention, will be found all that is requisite on the part of the Director: and, as I have elsewhere observed, a *small* power thus *statedly applied*, will be sufficient to keep the whole of this complicated machine in constant, equal motion.

The important advantages that have been derived from this attention, furnish a very animating motive to perseverance. With the same allowances; without any diminution in the prime cost of the different articles; and equalizing for the two periods the number of the family; a saving in the articles of flour, beer, butchers' meat, and garden-stuff only, was made in the last year's account, compared with that of the year preceding, amounting to 460*l.* 7*s.* and four months out of the twelve, or one third of the year, had elapsed, before these regulations were introduced.

At

At the same time that this reform took place in the pecuniary concerns of the House, the Directors turned their attention also to another object of much greater consequence — the moral discipline of the family. The same relaxation had here likewise taken place, and its consequences had probably aggravated the former evil.

As the first step towards effecting the desired reformation, a Committee was appointed to frame regulations for the management of the House Schools. The children were divided into classes. Stated hours appointed for the attendance of each class. Directions were given that the boys should be instructed by the school-master in writing and accounts, as well as spelling and reading; and the girls by the school-mistress in knitting and sewing, in addition to the former. Books were provided wherein to mark their daily attendance; and encouragements held out to those who distinguished themselves.

Among these younger branches of the family, a great and happy alteration is already visible. Among the adults, so speedy a reform of confirmed bad habits was not to be expected. An important check has however

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been

been interposed, and their external deportment is much more decent and becoming. Quarrels, and prophane abusive language, now very rarely take place; and the certain loss of their gratuity for such misconduct, operates as a very salutary restraint upon their vicious propensities. The Directors have caused the following notice to be printed in large characters, and hung up in various parts of the House. The rewards therein promised are regularly bestowed; and each pauper now finds that good conduct is invariably recompensed, whilst the reverse as certainly meets with proportionable punishment.

“ BOARD ROOM,

“ The Directors of this Establishment have thought it proper to inform the Poor, both Young and Old, who reside in this House, that it is their determined Resolution to enforce Obedience to those Rules and Ordinances which enjoin HONESTY, SOBRIETY, DILIGENCE, CLEANLINESS, & DECENCY.

“ They will on no account allow any SWÉARING, CURSING, LEWD or IMMORAL DISCOURSE, or DISORDERLY BEHAVIOUR.

“ And

“And all those who are guilty of the same, shall be deprived of their gratuity for the first offence; and upon a repetition of such misconduct, shall either be placed in the stocks, confined in the cell, fed on bread and water, or be otherwise punished in due proportion to the magnitude of their offences.

“On the other hand, the Directors will assuredly encourage and reward, those who shall by their good conduct approve themselves worthy of such distinction.

“And for that purpose they have resolved, that three Men's and three Boy's Blue Coats, three Women's and three Girl's brown Camblet or Stuff Gowns, together with Ribbon-bands, inscribed

THE REWARD OF GOOD CONDUCT, shall be distributed every four months, to those who shall in the judgment of the Directors appear best entitled, by their **DECENCY, DILIGENCE, and GOOD BEHAVIOUR,** to such rewards. But that any instance of **CURSING, SWEARING,** or other improper Conduct or Behaviour, shall be regarded as effectually precluding all claim thereto; and those who are guilty of the same shall be considered as having forfeited, and shall therefore be de-

prived of, the rewards that may prior to such misconduct have been bestowed upon them."

The Directors have erected a steam apparatus, upon the principle of Count Rumford's kitchen, but without the roaster; which was not required, as the provisions for the poor, are either boiled or baked. Prior to this, the meat for the matron's table was cooked at a large wasteful fire in the front kitchen, and the meat and vegetables for the poor in two or three boilers, with separate fires under each, in the back kitchen, with a consumption of thirty hundred of coal per week, as ascertained by actual experiment. A small fire in the front kitchen, now furnishes all that is necessary for the whole. At this fire the meat is roasted for the matron's table, and a flue passing from the back of the fire conveys the heat under a boiler filled with water, for the purpose of generating steam. A steam-pipe from this boiler is conveyed along the wall which separates the two kitchens; opposite to which, in the back kitchen, is placed a range of steam-kettles communicating with the steam-pipe by means of short cross pipes passing from the steam-pipe into these steam-kettles; on each of these cross pipes is placed a cock, by turning which
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the steam is conveyed into the kettles. These are large enough to contain three bushels of potatoes each, which are cooked in a superior manner, by means of steam only, than they were before in boilers of water. Two cross pipes pass through the wall into the front kitchen, and supply with steam two smaller steam-kettles, for the use of the matron's table only. It was necessary that the meat for the poor should be boiled in water as before, for the purpose of providing the quantity of broth required. To effect this, a second flue passes obliquely from the back of the same fire into the back-kitchen, and conveys sufficient heat to keep the water boiling in an iron boiler, in which the meat for the poor is cooked as before. This boiler is furnished with a cover, on Count Rumford's principle, to prevent the waste of nourishment by evaporation. The whole consumption of coal in cooking, is now no more than fifteen hundred weight per week, as ascertained likewise by actual experiment; being only half the quantity that was before required. To guard against the possibility of waste, checks are placed in the kitchen grate, that prevent the wings from being expanded beyond the width of sixteen inches, which is found to contain fire sufficient for every purpose.

As

As all the bread consumed is baked in the House, a separate bakehouse, with an oven large enough to bake a thousand pounds weight of bread at a time, was provided for the purpose. This oven had always been heated with wood fuel, but is now, by means of a small fire placed on the side of the front of the oven, with an opening into the latter, heated with coal. The smoke is carried off through a funnel or chimney, placed in the crown of the oven, just within the mouth. Less than a hundred of coal will make a fire sufficient for the purpose. This is lighted up in the morning, and in an hour or two communicates to the oven a degree of heat sufficient for the purpose of baking, which it will retain thro' the greater part of the day. When the oven has acquired this degree of heat, the fire is discontinued. The store-room for flour is over the bakehouse, and the Steward having weighed the quantity of flour required for the day's baking, it is put into a hopper, and passes through the floor into the kneading trough below.

Thus have I brought the History of the Shrewsbury House of Industry down to the present time. This continuation certainly furnishes many weighty and important lessons: and,

and, next to the unspeakable satisfaction I enjoy, from my humble co-operation with a truly respectable BOARD, in restoring this valuable Establishment to its former state of prosperity and usefulness; will be that of holding out any beneficial information to those who may have the conduct of similar Institutions, or be disposed to adopt a similar plan. For I am fully convinced that these Establishments, well conducted, have the happiest tendency to "better the Condition," improve the Morals, and promote the Happiness, of that large portion of the Community,

THE PAROCHIAL POOR.

Shrewsbury,
DEC. 1799.

I. WOOD.

BUTCHERS' CONTRACT.

Shrewsbury, December 16, 1799.

WE whose names are hereunto subscribed, do engage to serve the House of Industry with butchers' meat for the ensuing three months, at threepence per pound, on the following conditions:

That

That each of us in rotation shall supply the house with one hundred pounds weight of meat per week; twenty pounds of which shall be a round or flank of beef, and ten pounds shall be a joint of good veal, pork, or mutton, for the matron's table.

That the meat shall be sent up to the house before twelve o'clock on Monday mornings; and such of it that is not approved of, as not being good in quality, or having more than its proportion of bone, shall be returned; as also all sent beyond the quantity of one hundred pounds.

That the steward shall send notices every Monday morning, to those butchers whose turn it is to serve the house for that week.

That if the meat is not sent up before twelve o'clock on Monday mornings, the turn for that week shall be set aside.

That the steward shall weigh the meat when sent up, and give to each butcher a note of the weight; which notes shall be produced and delivered up when the bill is paid.

Separate Store-Book for Flour.

		Flour.	Bread.
		Pounds.	Pounds.
1799.			
Sept. 10.	=====	900	935
11.	=====	161	211
13.	=====	270	353
14.	=====	637	848
		1768	2347

The third of the above columns states the quantity of flour furnished for each day's baking; the fourth, the weight of the bread produced therefrom.

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Stores received in.

1799.	Beef	flour	pota- toes	cheefe	Small Beer	Better Beer
	lbs.	lbs.	bshls	lbs.	gal. qts.	gal. qts.
September 9th	44	3738		601	14 3	64 1
9th	622			61	246 0	
14th			18			
Adults 185						
Children 95						
<u>280</u>						
	666	3738	18	662	260 3	64 1
Consumed	568	1768	18	61	158 2	23 1
Remains	98	1970		601	102 1	41 0

STORE-BOOK.

Stores delivered out.

1799.	Beef.	flour	pota- toes	Cheese	Small Beer	Better Beer
	lbs.	lbs.	bshls	lbs.	al. qts.	gal. qts.
Sept. 9th Monday	10		3	61	31	3 1
10th Tuesday	81	700	3		29	2 3 1
11th Wednesday	10	161			7	0 3 1
12th Thursday	188		3		29	1 3 1
13th Friday	9	270	3		7	1 3 1
14th Saturday	81	637	3		29	3 4 0
15th Sunday	189		3		24	1 3 0
N. B. 9 persons on the sick diet.						
19 pints small beer for drink-						
meat for sick gal. qt. pt.						
2 1 1						
4 pints per day to						
Aaron Townsend 3 0 0						
Kitchen on Wed-						
nesday and Friday 2 0 0						
September 15, 1799.	568	1768	18	61	158	2 23 1

Compared at the same time the above account of the consumption of beef, flour, and beer, with the vouchers for the butchers', the mill, and the malt accounts, from June 10th up to the present date, and found them to be accurate, and to agree with each other.

I. WOOD.

*Internal Regulations for the Manchester House
of Recovery, referred to in p. 54, of the
foregoing Account.*

1. EVERY patient on admission, shall change his infectious, for clean linen; the face and hands shall be washed clean with lukewarm water, and the lower extremities fomented.

2. The clothes brought into the house by patients shall be properly purified and aired.

3. All linen and bed-clothes, immediately on being removed from the bodies of the patients, shall be immersed in cold water, before they are carried down stairs.

4. All discharges from the patients shall be removed from the wards without delay.

5. The floors of the wards shall be carefully washed twice a week, and near the beds every day.

6. Fumigation with nitre and concentrated vitriolic acid, which have been lately employed

ed with such success in his Majesty's military and naval hospitals, as an antidote to contagion, shall be used according to the directions of Dr. Smyth, twice daily in all the wards of the House of Recovery. The walls shall be frequently washed with quick-lime, fresh slaked in water, whilst it continues bubbling and hot.

7. No relation or acquaintance shall be permitted to visit the wards, without a written order from one of the physicians.

8. No strangers shall be admitted into the wards; and the nurses shall be strictly enjoined not to receive unnecessary visits.

9. No linen or clothes shall be removed from the House of Recovery, till they have been washed, aired, and freed from infection.

10. No convalescents shall be discharged from the house without a consultation of the physicians.

11. The nurses and servants of the house shall have no direct communication with the Infirmary; but shall receive the medicines in the room already appropriated to messengers from the home-patients.

12. The committee of the strangers' friend society shall be requested to undertake the office of inspecting the House of Recovery.

13. A weekly report of the patients admitted

mitted and discharged, shall be published in the Manchester newspapers.

14. When a patient dies in the wards, the body shall be removed as soon as possible into a room appropriated to that use; it shall then be wrapt in a pitched cloth, and the friends shall be desired to proceed to the interment as early as is consistent with propriety.

15. All provisions and attendance for the patients in this House of Recovery, shall be provided from the funds of this institution, without any communication with the Infirmary.

Regulations for the admission of patients into the House of Recovery, and for the Government of the Families of Home-patients afflicted with Fever.

I. **T**HAT the Physicians of the Infirmary shall be authorized to give one or two shillings, from the funds of this institution, (by a ticket to the secretary of the Board of Health) to the person who shall furnish the earliest information of the appearance

ance of fever in any poor family, within the limits of their respective districts.

2. That as soon as the secretary has received this ticket, he shall apply, or take care that application be made, to some Trustee of the Board of Health, living within the district, and who is a subscriber to the infirmary, for an immediate recommendation of the sick person as an home-patient.

3. That such patients as the physicians shall deem peculiar objects of recommendation, either on account of their extreme poverty, or of the close and crowded state of their habitations, shall be conveyed in a sedan chair (provided with a moveable washing lining) kept for the sole purpose, and distinguished by proper marks, to the house of Recovery.

4. That the physicians shall be requested to form the necessary regulations for the domestic government of the families of the home patients afflicted with fever.

5. That a reward, to the amount of ——— shall be given to the heads of the family, after the cessation of the fever, on condition that they have faithfully observed the rules prescribed for cleanliness, ventilation, and the prevention of infection amongst their neighbours. This reward shall be doubled in
case

case of extraordinary danger, and when the attentions have been adequate and successful.

6. That after the visitation of fever has ceased in any poor dwelling-house, the sum of or a sufficient sum, shall be allowed (to be expended under the direction of an inspector) for white-washing and cleansing the premises, and for the purchase of new clothes, or apparel, in lieu of such as it may be deemed necessary to destroy, to obviate the continuance or propagation of fever.

7. That an inspector shall be appointed in each district of the Infirmary, to aid the execution, and to enforce the observance of the foregoing regulations: and that the gentlemen of the strangers' friend society shall be requested to undertake this office.

Printed by J. and W. Eddowes, Corn-Market, Shrewsbury.

